Commentary

VOLUME EIGHTY-ONE • NUMBER FIVE • MAY 1986

How SDI Is Being Undone From Within

Angelo M. Codevilla

The Arab World Discovers Anti-Semitism
Bernard Lewis

Montezuma's Literary Revenge
Fernanda Eberstadt

Religion in Post-Protestant America
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Close Calls—A Story
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The Later, and Greater, Strauss
Samuel Lipman

Books in Review: Penn Kemble/Scott McConnell/ Larry D. Nachman/Jules Cohn/Theodore S. Hamerow

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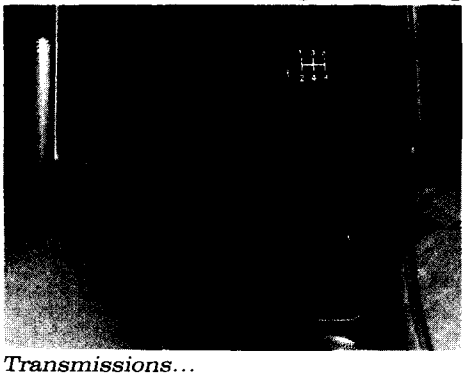

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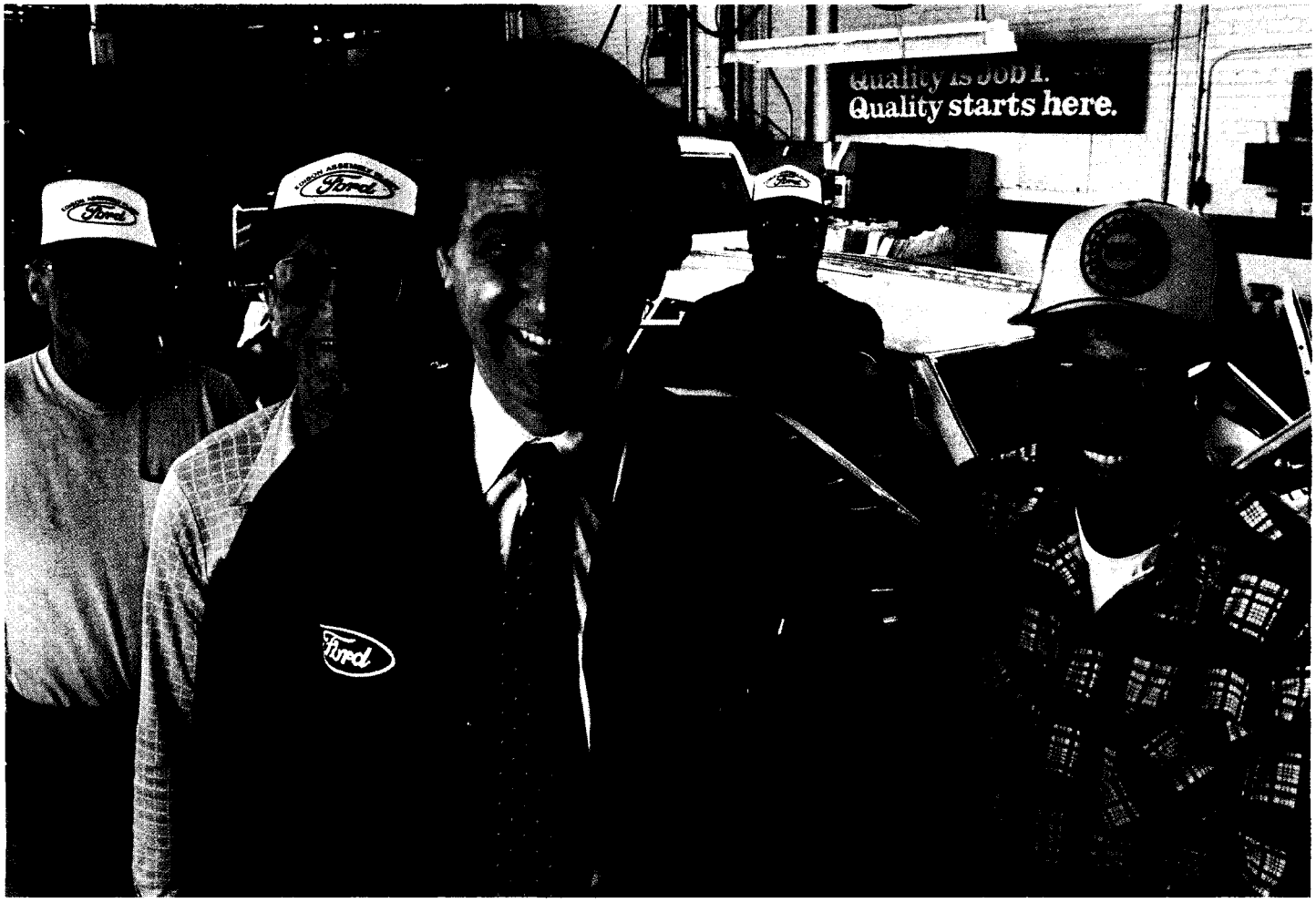

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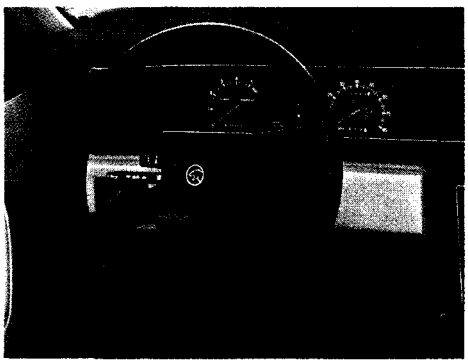

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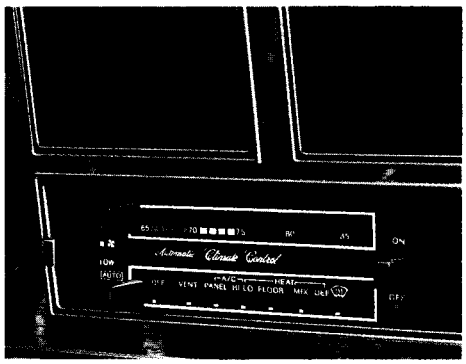

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Commentary

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COMMENTARY (ISSN 0010-2601) is published monthly by the American Jewish Committee—Single copy is $3.25, $33 a year; 3 years $89; 5 years $132—Add $5.00 per year for all foreign, including Canada and Latin America—Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to COMMENTARY, 165 East 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022.

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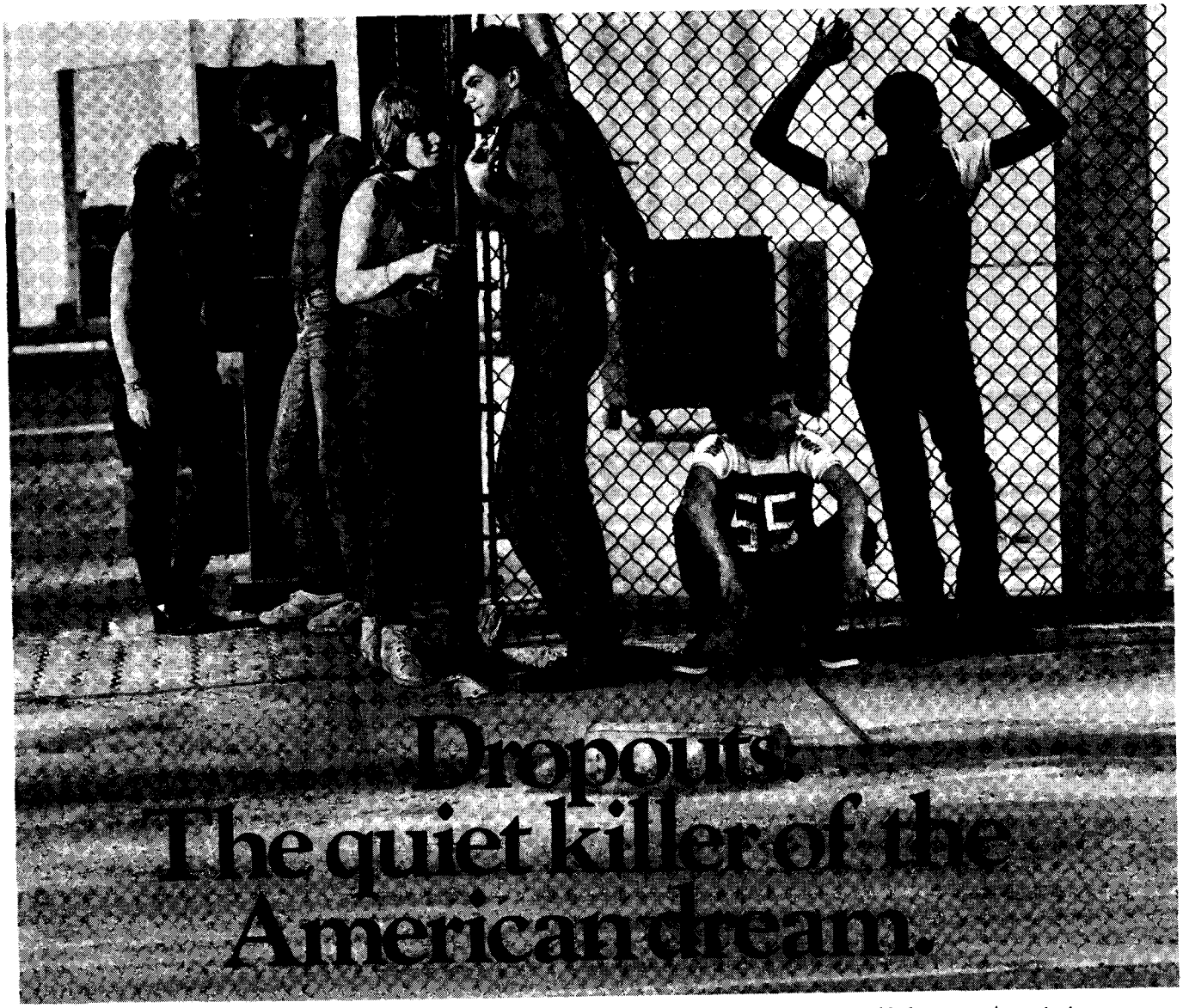

Dropouts. The quiet killer of the American dream.

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Thirty percent of America's teenagers aren't graduating from high school. That's three quarters of a million dropouts each year.

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The Business Advisory Commission of the Education Commission of the States recently called on all of society — business, schools, civic organizations, labor and professional groups — to address the dropout problem. We as a nation cannot let one quarter of America's youth continue to drift toward hopelessness.

That's why the National Education Association has initiated a major new effort to rescue young people from academic failure. NEA has committed $1.7 million to this effort — one dollar for every NEA member. We will devote $700,000 to this war-chest against scholastic failure to Operation Rescue, our new program to combat the dropout and illiteracy syndrome.

The remaining $1 million will establish an endowment to make educational excellence grants available to teachers for years to come. And we're asking other concerned groups — both inside and outside education — to join teachers in building this fund. Our aim is to begin funding local dropout prevention programs by the fall of 1986.

Our goal with Operation Rescue? We want to help cut the dropout rate in half by 1990.

Our goal as an association? In over 128 years, that's never wavered. We stand for excellence in every classroom, for every child.

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Letters from Readers

American Medicine

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In her article, "A Misdiagnosis of American Medicine" [January], Florence A. Ruderman comes to the highly original judgment that my work is tainted by an incoherent Marxism. Of the roughly 75 reviews of my book, *The Social Transformation of American Medicine*, hers is the first to detect any reliance on Marxist ideas. Miss Ruderman is also unique in suggesting that I portray American society in "negative" and "derisive" terms. No one who knows my work will recognize this portrait. It is a complete misrepresentation.

Miss Ruderman fails to acknowledge that my book includes severe criticism of Marxist interpretations of the development of American medicine (see pp. 227-29). Indeed, until now the most hostile reviews have come from Marxists—and this was to be expected, since I reject the thesis that the rise of scientific medicine can be explained by the "needs of capitalism." In commenting on this view I write: "The legitimacy of capitalism rested on more ample foundations than the alleged ideological functions of medicine in focusing attention on bacteria rather than class interests. Compared to the beliefs in economic opportunity and religious and political freedom, medicine played an insignificant role in sustaining democratic capitalism in America" (p. 228). No one given to Marxist thinking would even use the phrase "democratic capitalism."

The introduction to my book sets forth my intellectual position and theoretical perspective on the development of American medicine. I emphasize there my general commitment to a historical approach that incorporates cultural analysis and political economy and that attempts to trace patterns of social and economic relations to the "human actions that brought them about"—that is, the purposeful choices that individuals make. My views owe much to the methodological individualism, political realism, and interpretative sociology of Max Weber. They owe little to Marx.

In my account of the rise of the medical profession, the central term (never mentioned by Miss Ruderman) is "authority"—and authority, by the way, is not a bad word in my vocabulary. Authority is necessary in a free society; what threatens freedom is unchecked power (as in a totalitarian regime) or the collapse of effective authority (as in Lebanon). Authority is also necessary for medical care, but authority relations entail dependency, and they are often troubled and ambivalent. However, when I say that I want to explain the growth of the "cultural authority" of medicine, I am not suggesting (as Miss Ruderman states) that this necessarily diminished freedom. Furthermore, I do not take the view that human motivation is exclusively economic or that the growth in the status and authority of the medical profession can be explained solely by its "pursuit of wealth and power." Like other groups, the profession often acted to protect its interests, and this obviously gets a prominent place in any realistic account. But I explicitly reject (see pp. 143-44) the kind of one-sided analysis emphasizing power that Miss Ruderman ascribes to me.

As to some of Miss Ruderman's specific misrepresentations in her account of the first half of my book:

1. She claims that I see a "decline of democracy" (her phrase) and that I subscribe to the "radical elitist" view that a narrow group seized control of American society in the late 1800's. Not so. Following in a long tradition of historical scholarship, I argue that in the Jacksonian period American culture was characterized by a radical interpretation of democratic ideals, which was hostile to professional authority in all fields, including medicine. But I neither endorse this hostility to professionalism, nor argue that there was any subsequent "decline" of democracy—certainly not of political democracy, which obviously grew as the franchise was extended to new groups. Rather, between the Jacksonian and Progressive eras, there was a sharp change in the understanding of democratic ideals and their relation to medicine and science. Here is some of what I actually wrote:

> From the perspective of democratic thought in the early 19th century, the seeming complexity of medicine was artificial; if properly understood, medicine could be brought within reach of "common sense." The de-

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velopment of science broke that confidence. It helped establish the cultural authority of medicine by restoring a sense of its *legitimate complexity*. . . . Science shares with the democratic temper an antagonism to all that is obscure, vague, occult, and inaccessible, but it also gives rise to complexity and specialization, which then remove knowledge from the reach of lay understanding. For a time in the first half of the 19th century, the democratic claim [that useful medical knowledge ought to be accessible to common sense] prevailed in medicine. But the public, through its legislators and its own private decisions, gradually relinquished that claim as it became convinced of the growing complexity of medical science and the limits of lay competence (pp. 58-59).

The last sentence clearly indicates that I attribute the growth in medical authority not to the connivance of an elite but to the purposeful choices of the public, facing new conditions (including advances in science).

Miss Ruderman attributes to me the view that increased dependence on physicians meant a reduction in freedom. Elsewhere I have criticized Ivan Illich precisely on that point, and in my book I criticize Christopher Lasch for taking that view. With regard to Lasch I write:

> Except where doctors were given legal authority or institutional power as gatekeepers, clients became dependent upon physicians only as they sought out professional consultation. That act cannot be explained as pure coercion or false consciousness. Professionals might, as Lasch suggests, "ridicule" the capacity of people to care for themselves, but it seems more reasonable to look for the origins of increased resort to professional advice in the new conditions of life at the end of the 19th century . . . (p. 142).

I go on to discuss the "pervasive changes in everyday experience" that led Americans to rely "more on the complementary skills of others and less on their own unspecialized talents." These changes include developments in science, which take me to a second misrepresentation by Miss Ruderman.

2. My book is an attempt to account for transformations in the social and economic structure of American medicine; it is not a history of medical science. Nonetheless, where I believe that scientific developments are causally relevant —as they frequently are—I bring them into the analysis. The quotations above, as well as many other passages, indicate that I assign central importance to scientific developments. Miss Ruderman, however, is not convinced. She says that my argument is "false" because medicine has an "inner content" that determines its "outer" structure. Reasonable people may differ about how much causal significance to assign to "internal" versus "external" factors, and here Miss Ruderman and I have a genuine disagreement. She writes that science "sets its own course, defines its own goals." But consider medicine and science in Nazi Germany. Consider genetics and psychiatry in the Soviet Union. Science "cannot set its own course" because its institutions depend on the wider political and cultural environment.

The reason that "external" forces (culture, politics, economics) loom so large in my account of the social development of medical care is that health-care institutions vary enormously in the advanced-industrialized countries. Think of health care in Britain, Sweden, and America—drastically different social and economic arrangements, and yet medical science in these countries is fundamentally the same. I reject an "internalist" view not because I am a Marxist, but because it is completely unpersuasive in comparative perspective.

The "internalist" view also fails to explain the general rise of the professions in America. While medicine in America was becoming more professionalized, so were other fields, such as the law—and yet scientific change clearly cannot provide explanatory power there. Miss Ruderman says that besides medicine's inner content, the sources of the profession's rise lay in cultural traits, such as Americans' positive and activist view of the world and their concern about health. However, observers took note of such traits before, during, and after the rise of professional authority. These cultural patterns may distinguish America from some other societies, but they do not dis-

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tinguish America at different periods in its history; consequently they do not help in explaining why the status and authority of medicine have varied over time in the United States.

3. On the growing power of the regular physicians in the late 19th century, Miss Ruderman is simply unable to acknowledge the complexities in the story I tell. Allegedly summarizing my argument, she writes that "after gaining control of licensing, the profession drove rival health practitioners out of the field." This is the view of other analysts, but it is not exactly mine. Here is what I wrote: "The myth persists today that homeopaths and herbal doctors were suppressed by the dominant allopathic profession. Yet the sequence of events suggests otherwise." The major dissident medical sects received separate recognition from many licensing boards. "Only afterward did they lose their popularity." The reason that homeopathy died out, I argue, was that it collapsed from within:

> Homeopathy had one foot in modern science, the other in pre-scientific mysticism; this became an increasingly untenable position. While regular medicine was producing important and demonstrable scientific advances, homeopathy generated no new discoveries. The contrast was not lost on many in the group. They edged further away from Hahnemann [the founder of homeopathy]; the final dissolution came of itself (pp. 107-108).

This kind of argument—which can be found in other places as well—contradicts her report that I disregard medicine's content and treat the rise of a more homogeneous and authoritative profession as a matter of mere greed.

The first part of my book attempts to account for the rise of "professional sovereignty"; the second attempts to account for its erosion. The principal theme is first the development and then the unraveling of a system of economic and political arrangements that for a long time accommodated the concerns of private physicians and hospitals. However, many subordinate arguments are folded into the overall analysis—for example, why national health insurance was defeated; why private health plans took the form of Blue Cross "service benefits" and commercial indemnity insurance; etc. The general structure of my account emphasizes the reciprocal effects of political choice and changes in institutional structure. Thus the political defeat of compulsory health insurance opened the way to private insurance plans, whose effects on the distribution of health care posed new political choices. Postwar government policies promoted the expansion of medical schools and hospitals, whose development changed the character—and raised the cost—of health services. When passed in 1965, Medicare included provisions for reimbursing hospitals and doctors that deprived the government of effective leverage for cost control, but since the early 1970's private employers and government have both turned to methods of cost containment that tend to reduce professional autonomy and hospital expansion.

For Miss Ruderman to pin the label "Marxist" on this analysis is outlandish. The one passage she has found where I use the terms "forces" and "social relations of production" begins with the words "It is as if . . ." and occurs a page after I criticize Marxist theories for a second time (see p. 377). Dialectical materialism is not my style.

In discussing the second half of the book, Miss Ruderman strings together unrelated phrases and ideas in an astonishing jumble of misreadings. Her basic point here is that I supposedly belittle every accomplishment of American society. She suggests, for example, that I am cynical and dismissive of "every extension" of health programs. "His chapter titles and subheadings tell the story: 'The Mirage of Reform'; 'Grand Illusions'; 'Health Care in a Blocked Society.'" But let's see what those are about. In "The Mirage of Reform" I examine why liberals thought compulsory insurance was at hand three times—before World War I, during the New Deal, and in the late 1940's—yet each time success eluded their grasp. Hence the reference to reform as a "mirage." "Grand Illusions" is a subheading in that chapter describing the failure of the first of these reform campaigns. And what about "Health Care in a Blocked Society"? That deals with the political stalemate over domestic policy during the Ford and Carter administrations. Miss Ruderman's suggestion that these titles reveal cynicism and hostility toward America is strange, to say the least.

Representative of Miss Ruderman's standards of criticism is her alleged summary of my explanation for the passage of Medicaid: "Medicaid was passed not so much to provide medical care for the poor, as to 'cover . . . bad debts for hospitals.'" In fact, this is no part of my explanation for the enactment of the program. "The social programs of the 1960's," I write in a passage about the 20th-century shift in concern from mass to minority poverty, "were aimed specifically at reducing the exclusion from medical care of the poor and the aged, who were marginal to the core sectors of the economy where health insurance was available as a fringe benefit" (p. 373). The reference to hospitals' bad debts occurs in a passage comparing the later support for Medicaid and neighborhood health centers. And it is undeniably true that the hospitals developed a financial stake in Medicaid that they never had in the neighborhood centers. Miss Ruderman here misrepresents as a cause for Medicaid's adoption what I present as only one of several reasons for subsequent hospital industry support of the program.

Miss Ruderman suggests that I minimize the value of Medicaid and other health programs. "Belittle as he will, however, Starr cannot disguise the fact that an enormous liberalization of medicine has taken place." But far from "disguising" these changes, my book and other writings of mine try to present a balanced appraisal of the successes and limitations of government programs. I argue that they widened access to medical care and contributed to the improving health of our society (see pp. 372-74 and my essay, "Health Care for the Poor: The Past Twenty Years," in *Antipoverty Policies: What Works, What Doesn't*, edited by S. Danziger and D. Weinberg and published by Harvard University Press this spring). Yet the programs also proved more expensive than if they had been established on a more cost-conscious foundation and left about one-tenth of the American people without health insurance. To point out such things is not to belittle our achievements.

I could go on with example after example. The distortions are so bold that I rub my eyes in disbelief. They do, however, fall into a pattern. Where I have given a complex explanation or appraisal, Miss Ruderman misrepresents me as having emphasized only one element,

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which she reports in a highly prejudicial fashion. In several instances she associates me with ideas that I specifically reject. And she likes to scramble and rearrange elements in an argument to make them sound absurd.

Consider, finally, her misreading of my political position. She says that I oppose the "pro-competition" plans for health care. I do see dangers in the current growth of corporate health care, but I have been an advocate of market-oriented health-care reforms, such as the development of health maintenance organizations, as I have explained at some length in articles in the *Public Interest* and the *New Republic*. (My book, I should note, does not include any policy recommendations, but in footnotes I cite articles of mine that do.) The book jacket carries an endorsement by the economist Alain Enthoven, one of the most prominent advocates of competitive strategies in health policy.

Now make no mistake: I am a liberal and favor the provision of health insurance to the roughly 30 million uninsured and the maintenance of a strong system of public-health services. But I am open to a range of ideas about improving our health-care system. I supported the Reagan administration's original proposal to change the tax treatment of health insurance. Last year, when I was invited to talk about health policy over lunch with a group of Senators, my host was Senator Dave Durenberger, the chief Republican on health affairs.

Miss Ruderman has apparently taken it upon herself to unmask Marxist and anti-American sentiments where no one else has detected them, but she must explain how these insidious views got past everyone else. Her theory of why "such a bad book" should have been so highly praised plainly does not fit the facts. She says that the reception reflects the dominance of Marxist ideas in sociology. Even if this doubly mistaken view were correct (doubly mistaken because I am no Marxist, and neither are the great majority of my colleagues), sociologists are not the ones who have given my book prominence. Miss Ruderman must also call into question the intelligence of the professional historians who award the Bancroft Prize in American History; the Pulitzer Prize jury; the board of the American College of Health Care Executives, which chose my book for its Hamilton Prize; and even the American Medical Association, which distributed my book to its board of trustees and had me speak to its National Leadership Conference a year ago.

Miss Ruderman's repeated references to the public reception given my book suggest that this attention has so unsettled her that she cannot read it calmly and report it accurately. If this attention has excited a certain professional resentment, I am truly sorry. It was not my doing, and envy is one of those diseases for which even modern medicine has no cure. But if she writes out of political animus, there is a remedy at once effective and pleasant to those who take it: a decent respect for the facts.

PAUL STARR
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Princeton, New Jersey

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In her article, Florence A. Ruderman refers to Paul Starr's *The Social Transformation of American Medicine* as a "false picture," asks "why people whose business it should be to uphold scholarly standards have praised it in terms that are not only extravagant but *completely false*" (emphasis added), and goes on in *ten* other references (talk of extravagance!) to charges of "nonsense," lack of knowledge, "characteristically distorted discussion," and the like.

Surely these are excessive and arbitrary statements for a work that won a Pulitzer Prize and the Bancroft Prize (the first time an award given for American history went to a sociologist—who, according to Miss Ruderman, distorts American history), so that one would assume that responsible editors would approach such statements with caution.

Miss Ruderman never answers her own further question as to why such a "bad book should have become so successful." The one effort she makes is laughable. She states that Starr is negative about America, and therefore fits a prevailing academic mood, and that, despite himself, he is a Marxist. She quotes *one* instance where Starr uses the phrase (after a wry "as if") "forces of production," and then writes:

> . . . Starr's book does not reflect a coherent Marxist viewpoint. . . . What it shows is that, without their necessarily being Marxists or taking consistently Marxist positions, for Starr and other sociologists like him the only available ideas are Marxist ideas. Ultimately there is no other intellectual or scientific baggage . . . that they know or consider respectable.

No, this is not laughable; it is mendacious. The "intellectual baggage" that Starr carries is not that of Marx but of Max Weber. The focus of his book was the question of *cultural authority* (a central Weberian problem which Marxists have never confronted since their framework is domination, class rule, hegemony, or the "needs" of the system), and with great subtlety and learning Starr sought to show how in a society which was, in the Jacksonian period, populist, egalitarian, and anti-intellectual, the medical profession was able to achieve cultural authority. And one cannot answer that this was due to the prestige of science alone.

Having characterized Starr in sledgehammer terms, Miss Ruderman turns coy in her concluding paragraph, when she writes: "What is one to say of sociologists, including some of the most distinguished in America today, who fail to recognize this kind of 'study' for what it is—or who do recognize it, and join in the acclaim anyway?"

Miss Ruderman will know, though the readers of COMMENTARY may not, that I was Paul Starr's Ph.D. thesis adviser (the thesis is substantially the first half of the book), and that I read the manuscript line by line—as is clear in Starr's acknowledgments. Would the use of my name give the reader caution about the reckless use of the "Marxist" label? Or would Miss Ruderman care to engage me in a discussion of Marxism?

What is troublesome in all this is that legitimate questions of scholarly dispute (an internalist or externalist debate about the development of intellectual and scientific institutions) become subordinate to ideological heresy hunts. What else is one to make of the statement that "the C. Wright Mills award for Starr's book is entirely appropriate"? The Mills prize was also won by Rosabeth Moss Kanter for a book on *Men and Women of the Corporation*, and Miss Kanter recently has been given a chair in entrepreneurial studies at the Harvard Business School. Is the Business School also to be tainted by that association?

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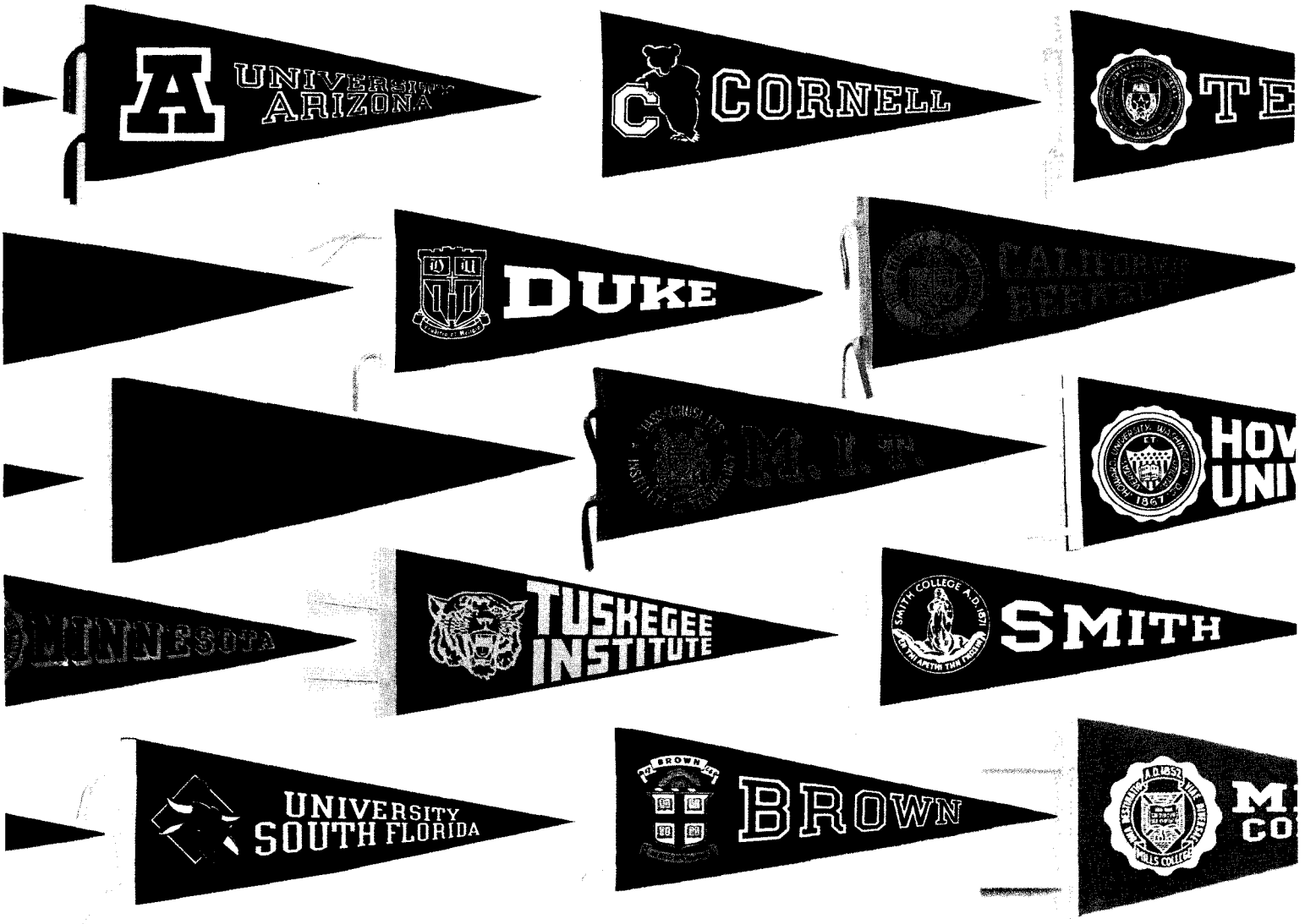

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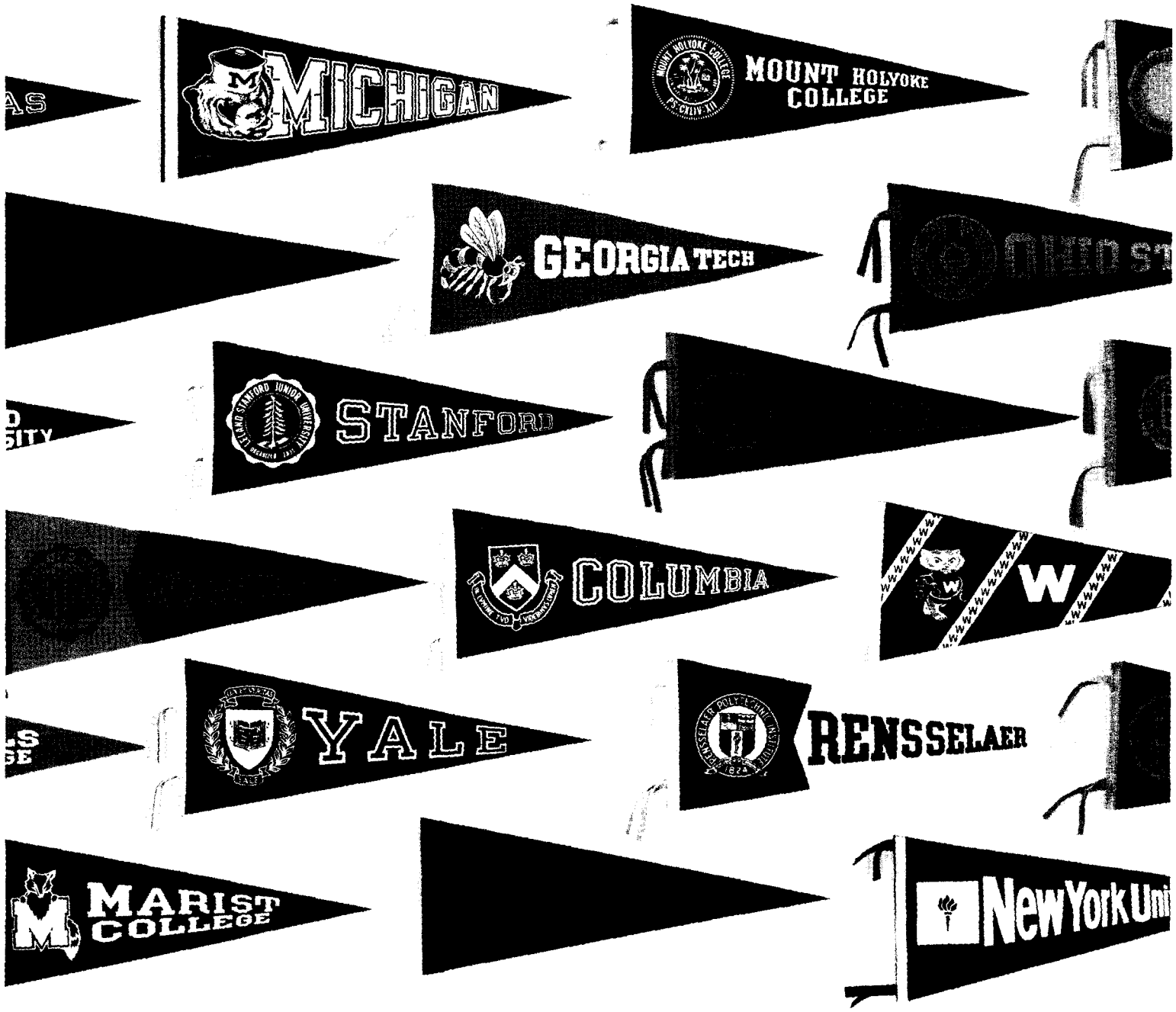

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Many years ago, Sidney Hook proposed an "ethics of controversy" in which he suggested ground rules to exclude ideological blackening as a substitute for rational discourse. I would hope that intellectual exchanges be carried on in that spirit.

DANIEL BELL
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Cambridge, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Florence A. Ruderman is not the first to remark upon a lack of theoretical coherence in the sociology of medicine, but her attempt to indict all sociology in the name of Paul Starr's well-deserved success is, I think, particularly repulsive, hopelessly self-serving, and just plain embarrassing. Starr's book, I think, infuriates her because it aspires to be a synthesis of historical and sociological understanding of a major institution in modern society. . . .

By citing Starr's departure from Harvard and then viciously attacking his work, Miss Ruderman plays the *ad-hominem* strategy in its most destructive form. The reader unfamiliar with the characteristic lack of generosity among some sociologists, especially those in the same subfield (e.g., the sociology of medicine), might be led to conclude that Miss Ruderman's broadside exposes a fault line that is supposed to explain why Starr was denied tenure at Harvard. This conclusion is not only false, it plays directly into the hands of those who think that "qualitative" sociology is by definition suspect, when in fact there is plenty of bad "quantitative" work that goes unremarked. . . .

The sociology of medicine does have a rich history of its own, and Miss Ruderman is mistaken when she suggests that the field is impoverished because of its recent origin or because "classical" sociologists appear to have neglected questions about medicine. I would refer her to Max Weber's observation in *Science as a Vocation* that "Whether life is worth living and when—this question is not asked by medicine." Those who ask why it is not asked by medicine have probed the meaning of medicine and its practice in ways that Miss Ruderman either willfully ignores or does not know. Weber's observation may now be under an unprecedented revision, as a bureaucratic bioethics assumes new responsibility for asking questions that were once forbidden to be asked.

And so one is left to ponder Miss Ruderman's ruminations over Starr's liberalism, displayed in his interpretation that institutions, social structure, and social systems shape the practice of medicine. In her reference to medicine's own "powerful inner content," as if this phrase were a response to and a replacement for Starr's own perspective, Miss Ruderman trivializes what could have been another opportunity to engage us all in a fuller discussion of the character of a profession and the character of its professionals. If all she means by "inner content" is socialization, she has merely introduced the other side of the reductionist coin. Instead of money and political power (the terms she uses for reducing Starr's work to her size), she substitutes the physician's knowledge and medical technology as core variables for making sense of the medical profession. . . .

Starr's victimization, in the face of the success of his book, is testament to the fact that some sociologists are wrecked by others' success. If he has been called to speak at medical meetings (and I expect he has, often), it is because his book speaks to the same profession about which Miss Ruderman believes he knows nothing. . . .

JONATHAN B. IMBER
Department of Sociology
Wellesley College
Wellesley, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Florence A. Ruderman's scathing analysis of Paul Starr's *The Social Transformation of American Medicine*, while critically correct, ultimately misses the underlying accuracy of the book.

The medical profession is now under siege and will shortly suffer a major assault. . . . A policy is now in place . . . to curtail medical expense and to modify health practice. What form of care will develop over the next decade is difficult to assess, but the reformulation of expectations in the context of this revolution is required.

Our principles of medical care were formed during the course of a scientific renaissance that has taken place in the medical sciences over the past 100 years. . . . But when viewed critically, the process by which death rates have fallen and life expectancy has risen is a result, as many critics have noted, of modern sanitation, nutrition, and changes in "life-style." . . . The conclusion that the sophistication of our medical practice accounts for maybe a 10-percent difference in "health" is astounding (see V.R. Fuchs, *Who Shall Live?*, Basic Books, 1974). Though one might disagree about the exact figure, . . . it is still lower than most people think. . . . Nevertheless, this is the powerful dialectic the medical profession has employed to sell its goods: individual life is saved, and to that end all resources must be applied. . . .

The public, however, knows better. By consensus, decisions on care no longer rest entirely with the physician. . . . Physicians are trained as scientists who apply scientific principles to disease. But that is no longer sufficient. . . . The rise of holistic medicine, the diversity of common conceptions of disease and health, and the demand for physician accountability are mere reflections of the public's ambivalent attitude toward medicine and physicians as *technicians* of health. While acknowledging the power of modern medicine and its agents, the limits of science and technology are broadly appreciated. The scrutiny of medicine as a business, with excess costs and demands on society, is really the voice of a more skeptical public, alerted to the danger of total reliance on the scientific panacea. . . .

As Miss Ruderman clearly states, . . . medicine is now facing an adjustment in its place in society's structure. . . . The crisis is not only in the new restrictions on medicine's economic growth, but in the expectations of its promise. . . . Doctors are no longer primarily regarded as physicians, but rather as technocrats, or, at best, scientists. . . . When doctors were perceived as healers, ministering to each aspect of care—physical, mental, emotional, spiritual—integration of all health factors was accomplished. As the doctor became a technician, relying on the necessary but insufficient power of science, he lost his credibility as healer . . . and is now perceived as just another interest group. The profession may no longer pray only to the fallen idol of science, but must again become the physician of the body, mind, and soul. Until this is undertaken by the doctor as a *professional* goal, the larger debate will go on without

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him, to the detriment of both parties.

For the physician's part, I argue that we must again assert the healing hand comprehensively. This process must begin in medical school, be firmly established in postgraduate training, and be continually developed professionally. Doctors must become recognized as ethicists, psychologists, and good samaritans. Why should a recent poll show that 85 percent of the respondents had either changed physicians in the past five years or wanted to, and that their reasons were not those of professional competency? . . . Why is the attendance of a physician at a patient's funeral considered unusual? . . .

Only by addressing the "humanity" issue directly will the medical profession refute that part of Starr's analysis which rings true and has evoked the positive reception given his modest "masterpiece." Once credibility is again established, the healing mission will again have its best advocate.

ALFRED I. TAUBER, M.D.
Boston University School of Medicine
Boston, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I have been deeply troubled by all the attention Paul Starr's book has received, especially in view of its negativism and its neglect of such factors as the influence of technology. Those of us who try to do a good job as medical sociologists are sometimes overwhelmed by a book like Starr's. Therefore I welcomed Florence A. Ruderman's wonderful article, which I found refreshing in its clarity and good common sense—a very useful contribution.

GORDON H. DEFRIESE
Health Services Research Center
University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

FLORENCE A. RUDERMAN writes:

Let me thank Gordon H. DeFriese for his kind comments.

Alfred I. Tauber's letter provides a good example of the kind of reasoning that helped make Paul Starr's book so widely acclaimed. There is a general sense, among physicians and laymen alike, that there is much wrong with medicine today, and that the field is facing new challenges without a clear sense of direction. In this climate of uncertainty and internal self-doubt, Starr's book, which piles up and muddles so many variables, seems to have something to offer. But that is all it does offer: an illusion. The book provides no analysis of anything that Dr. Tauber mentions. Even with regard to medicine's structure and economics—Starr's primary focus—the book offers little insight into any current issue, and on such matters as medicine's relationship to science, to technology, to "healing," Starr, as I indicated in my article, has nothing to say. Not only does he say nothing about how these relationships might be reshaped, he does not even define them or discuss the problems surrounding them. What he does is to create so much confusion, so much *pretense* of saying something, by piling up so much loose, vague, and even incoherent argumentation, that many people have been willing to assume that he must be saying something profound—or to read into the book's ambiguities and pretenses a meaning that simply is not there.

Jonathan B. Imber accuses me of *ad-hominem* arguments, but I can hardly imagine a more *ad-hominem* attack, or jumble, than his letter. To reply to only a few points: my article was not "supposed to explain why Starr was denied tenure at Harvard." I mentioned this matter simply as part of the controversy that surrounds Starr. My subject was Starr's book. I did *not* argue that the sociology of medicine lacks a history of its own. My point was that medical sociology does not have a long intellectual pre-history comparable to that of sociology's "core" fields, nor does it have the kind of classic works of theory and methodology that the founders of sociology provided for these core fields. On Mr. Imber's reference to Max Weber: in developing the idea that all fields accept certain values or beliefs as axiomatic, Weber gave as an example medicine's belief in the value of life. Does Mr. Imber bring this up to try to claim that Weber provided a study of medicine? He did not. Or is Mr. Imber arguing, apropos of nothing, that beliefs that are unquestioned at one time may be questioned at a later time? If so, what has that got to do with the present discussion? Finally, I find it interesting that Starr and his supporters can only imagine base or petty motives for a critical analysis of his book. Are there really no other possibilities?

If Daniel Bell had read my article more calmly, he might have seen that I did not accuse Starr of being a Marxist, but of engaging in "Marx-babble," and of providing an interpretation of medicine's behavior that is in fact a very crude derivative of Marxism. In Starr's book, medicine is motivated solely, exclusively, by the pursuit of wealth and power. His analysis develops no other motivation, goal, or drive —ever—in over 200 years of the profession's history. Are we now to learn that this approach is Weberian?

As for the claim that the book is Weberian because it deals with authority, a major concern of Weber's—this is simply beside the point. The topic may be Weberian; Starr's treatment of it is not. Nothing in Starr's method, theory, mode of argumentation, or anything else is remotely Weberian. On the contrary, in his consistent denial to medicine of any significant motivation but the pursuit of wealth and power; in his equally consistent refusal to grant causal force to positive values in American culture, at least since the "end of democracy" in 1850; in his treatment of all problems now facing medicine as though they involved only competing economic and power interests, and never genuine medical, scientific, and policy dilemmas—in all of this and much more, Starr in his book is un-, and even anti-Weberian.

Moreover, in citing one particular example (not an isolated instance), my point—which both Messrs. Bell and Starr ignore—was not simply that it is Marx-babble, but, more fundamentally, that if Starr's analysis were sound, it would cast light on the changes that have been taking place in medicine's authority and structure. As it is, however, the "theory," pretentious as it is, leads nowhere, illuminates nothing: hence the babble.

On the C. Wright Mills Award: I considered it appropriate because Starr's book (in its method, general orientation, etc.) is in the Millsian tradition. I said nothing about other books that have won this award, just as I said nothing about other books that have won the Pulitzer Prize. Rosabeth Moss Kanter's book is a good book; I use it in several of my courses. This point of Mr. Bell's is simply irrelevant.

Finally, Mr. Bell's fury carries him to an extraordinary length: he implies that I should not have criticized Starr's book for Marx-babble

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(or anything else?) since I knew that he—Daniel Bell—was Starr's adviser. Is he serious? Sociology may have drifted far from scientific norms in recent years, but surely not that far. *The Social Transformation of American Medicine* is a bad book, muddled, pretentious, and with a crudely negative view of medicine and American society. I can only deplore the fact that Mr. Bell has done so much to give it its unmerited reputation, and now comes to Starr's defense with rage and irrelevancies.

In his own letter, Paul Starr manages to evade, or confuse, every issue that I raised. I cannot deal with everything in his letter here; only a few central points.

First, to repeat what I have already said in my response to Daniel Bell, I do not consider Starr a Marxist. I did not accuse him of taking a Marxist position; in fact, I accused him of having no coherent or avowed position of any sort. But throughout his book there is a crude economics-and-power reductionism; a consistently negative and often snide tone about every aspect of American life, culture, and politics; recurrent bits of Marx-babble and flirtations with a radical posture. (The examples I gave were not even the most egregious ones.) And this is made all the worse by the fact that there is never an attempt to argue or defend what the insinuations, the slurs, and the general negativism imply. Starr does, in three pages, reject one particular Marxist interpretation of medicine's development: this is the far-fetched thesis argued by E. Richard Brown in *Rockefeller Medicine Men*, according to which American medicine was given its direction, or focus, by philanthropic foundations acting to shore up capitalism. As far as it goes, Starr's discussion here is good, but these three pages seem to have blinded many readers to the mixture of economic reductionism and stray Marx-babble that otherwise pervades the book.

Second, to repeat again, I noted that in Starr's portrayal, the medical profession is motivated by nothing except a drive to wealth, status, and power. I asked: can *any* profession's behavior be explained this way? Do medicine's values, its ancient and universal traditions, its commitment to society, its daily struggles with human suffering, really play no role in motivating the field? Are these factors really never significant in doctors' decisions and actions that shape the structure of medicine? This is not a marginal issue; it is crucial. Starr's answer is characteristically evasive and misleading—"I do not take the view that human motivation is exclusively economic or that the growth in the status and authority of the medical profession can be explained solely by its 'pursuit of wealth and power' "—and he refers us to pp. 143-44 of his book. Thus he evades *my* question with a vague generality, and then shifts the ground to something else, "the growth in the status and authority of the medical profession" (this is what the pages he cites deal with). But my question had to do with the motivations of *medicine*, not with the growth in the external status and authority of the profession. The latter, as I made clear in my article, Starr attributes to a whole sea of variables, including "the decline of democracy," urbanization, the telephone, etc., etc. The former, medicine's motivations, he connects solely with a concern with material advantage: solidarity, income, monopoly. Starr is unable to refute this; he cannot cite one instance in his almost 500 pages in which he shows any other motivation or drive as a significant factor in medicine's actions or decisions. Not one.

I want to call attention also to the fact that—again in an absolutely characteristic way—Starr willfully misunderstands what I said about medical sociology's "externality" to medicine. He argues that an "internalist" position ignores social structure, economics, etc. This is nonsense, and not at all the point I was making. My criticism was directed not at his having included structural factors such as economics, but to his having *totally excluded* medicine's interior forces. Starr's lack of grasp of the subject—and, incidentally, of anything Weberian—is shown precisely in his insistence that one must take an "either-or" position: either only external, non-medical forces shape medicine, or only internal, purely medical forces do. This is precisely what I argued against.

Third, I wrote that Starr's thesis, which purports to explain why American society became increasingly respectful of medicine and willing to accord it authority after the middle of the 19th century, is specious and vacuous. I noted that the commonly accepted explanation attributes this development to medicine's growing identification with science; and I added that a role was also played by powerful cultural forces such as the high value put on life, health, and well-being; the receptivity to science and technology coupled with scientific backwardness; the eagerness for progress; optimism; activism. Every significant cultural feature of American society, from the start, was favorable to the emergence of medicine as a venerated profession, which would be accorded great leeway to shape its own structure and be lavishly rewarded. But this process could not begin until the relevant sciences had reached a critical point, and medicine had drawn closer to them. Until that time, there was no rational basis for allowing physicians great authority, or ceding power to them; the village granny or one's own "common sense" did just as well.

No elaborate argument positing a change in political and social consciousness is necessary to account for society's changing attitude toward a changing profession. It was not the Jacksonian ethos (belief in the common man, etc.) that made medicine's status low in the early period—and not the absence or decline of this ethos that made it high in a much later period. Starr's argument here, I wrote, is simply an enormously elaborated tautology. Phrases like "changes in . . . forms of consciousness," "the retreat of private judgment," etc. sound meaningful but are really meaningless. Starr creates an unnecessary mystery about medicine's rising authority in order to solve it with a tortured and vacuous "argument."

Fourth, in analyzing Starr's interpretation of medicine's rise, I noted that a central concept—one of three, he tells us in the introduction, on which his argument rests—is dependency. (The other two are authority and legitimacy.) Both he and Daniel Bell now accuse me of "concealing" the fact that Starr deals with "authority," or "cultural authority." But there was nothing to conceal. I was making the point that *all* of Starr's concepts involve stunning amounts of pretense, muddle, and ambiguity, and in the end turn out either to have no meaning, or to have the most ordinary, commonplace meaning. This point is unaffected by whether one considers just one of Starr's key concepts or all three (or, for that matter, any other concept in his book).

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I asked: what does this key concept of dependency mean? In Starr's discussion it is always surrounded by dire hints of loss of freedom, diminished belief in oneself, the decline of democracy. I then suggested that it may actually have none but the most obvious, commonplace meaning. And now Starr in his letter confirms that this is so. He does not actually give a definition, but this is about as close as he comes: "Authority is . . . necessary for medical care, but authority relations entail dependency, and they are often troubled and ambivalent." For this no one needed Starr's theory.

My criticisms of Starr's book remain. His letter, despite its length, has not answered them, or it has answered them in such a way as to strengthen my case that the book offers a theory that is meaningless, and a caricature of medicine, of American society, and of sociology.

Women's Studies at Kenyon

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The following is a letter signed by 75 members of the Kenyon College faculty responding to Elizabeth Lilla's article, "Who's Afraid of Women's Studies?" [February]. The letter was circulated informally among the faculty. Thus, not every member had an opportunity to sign it. However, those who did sign constitute a clear majority of the faculty and represent every academic department. Both junior and senior faculty members are included.

We sincerely hope that this letter will help to rectify the image of Kenyon College presented in Mrs. Lilla's article.

We are both distressed and confused by Elizabeth Lilla's recent article, "Who's Afraid of Women's Studies?" As faculty members at Kenyon College, we are concerned about her portrayal of Kenyon as simultaneously intellectually repressive and dissension-riddled because of the presence of women's studies. Our confusion stems from being unable to comprehend why Mrs. Lilla believes this is an accurate picture of Kenyon.

It is true that women's studies has been the focus of discussion and debate at Kenyon. This is both expected and healthy. Indeed, any modification of the curriculum (such as the institution of our Integrated Program in Humane Studies) generates such debate at Kenyon. However, the nature and outcome of the debate over women's studies are, in our opinion, quite different from what has been presented by Mrs. Lilla. The faculty has been consistently supportive of women's studies. For example, the faculty voted to send the women's-studies proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) by more than a 2-to-1 margin (the vote was 77-36). The proposal concerning the director of Women's Academic Concerns was submitted to the administration carrying the signatures of 25 women faculty members and administrators. This represents not only the vast majority of women faculty members, but nearly one-quarter of the entire faculty. Faculty support for women's studies is also reflected in the fact that fully a dozen courses in this year's course catalogue refer to gender issues in either their title or

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course description. Many other courses include at least some discussion of gender issues.

Of course, if one accepted Mrs. Lilla's conceptualization of the situation, it could be argued that such faculty support is attributable to administrative pressure. There are at least two clear-cut examples that this would be an erroneous conclusion. First, last year the *Gambier Journal* charged that women faculty were being pressured by the administration to conform to feminist ideology and teaching. At that time, 18 women faculty members sent a letter to the campus newspaper stating that they had not personally been victims of such pressure and had no knowledge of anyone who had been. These faculty members then requested that anyone who was so pressured come forward so that we could support a grievance against the administration. No one did. Second, the Women's Faculty Caucus, referred to in the article as initiated by the provost, was actually started to raise questions about the hiring and retention of women faculty. Both the president and the provost were the targets of these inquiries and complaints.

We are also confused by Mrs. Lilla's contention that Kenyon students are apathetic about women's studies. It is true that the formal initiative for women's studies came from the faculty. Again, this is expected and healthy. Curricular modification is the realm of the faculty, not the students. We did not ask the students if they "approved" of the recent change in diversification requirements. They were not consulted about whether to grant credit for physical-education courses. We do not seek their advice about how the requirements for a major should be structured. Rather, we consistently assume that the faculty is best equipped to judge what constitutes a "good" education. Let us reiterate that the faculty has clearly indicated that the inclusion of women's studies improves the quality of education at Kenyon.

This is not to say that student opinion and interest are completely irrelevant. Mrs. Lilla's statement that ". . . only 32 out of a possible 1,400 students signed up . . ." for the women's-studies survey course is misleading. Thirty-two is a large enrollment at Kenyon. The average class only has 15-20 students and many classes enroll fewer than 10 students. Since this course fulfills neither diversification nor major requirements, it is actually surprising that so many students enrolled. This, by the way, is one reason that we cannot expect high enrollments in the course every year. Many interested Kenyon students simply cannot fit the course into their schedule.

It is also misleading to judge interest in women's studies solely on the basis of enrollments in the survey course. Many of the courses we referred to above are fully enrolled. In fact, this year's women's-studies course on the family is overenrolled (i.e., is over the enrollment limit) despite the fact that it fills no requirements. The movie *Not a Love Story*, cited by Mrs. Lilla as exemplifying administrative bias, was shown three times because of student demand. All of the students who wanted to see the movie could not fit into the auditorium during the originally scheduled two showings. While it is certainly true that not all Kenyon students are interested in women's studies, it is absolutely clear that a significant number of them have at least some interest.

Obviously, then, we believe that Mrs. Lilla has presented a distorted view of women's studies at Kenyon. We do not know the source of her perspective. We do know that she did not interview this year's or last year's Coordinator of Women's Studies. Nor did she speak to the chair of the Women's Faculty Caucus. We doubt that she even discussed this issue with a representative sample of Kenyon faculty or students. While we have not addressed every issue raised in her article, we hope that we have touched on enough of the major issues at least partially to correct her negative image of Kenyon College.

LINDA SMOLAK
Coordinator of Women's Studies
Kenyon College
Gambier, Ohio

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

None of us at Kenyon is terribly pleased by the story of the college told by Elizabeth Lilla. But we are also distressed by the letter sent to you over the signatures of many of our colleagues. They state that Mrs. Lilla has presented a false picture, and we believe that, unfortunately, Mrs. Lilla's account is substantially correct.

Although our colleagues were no doubt motivated by an understandable desire to protect the college from adverse publicity, we feel that their letter manifests a certain hypocrisy and results in unfairness to Mrs. Lilla. Many of the staff and faculty who signed that letter are recent additions to the college who could not have known at first hand of the events they describe. And some of the signers, who also signed another letter to which they refer, in which administrative pressure to conform to a feminist agenda is denied, were in fact the very women who in private conversations earlier complained of that pressure.

We are sorry to see truth and fairness sacrificed, even if with the best of intentions, and we hope our colleagues will forgive us for saying so.

CARL BREHM, RICHARD B. HOPPE,
ROBERT H. HORWITZ,
THOMAS SHORT
Kenyon College
Gambier, Ohio

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

During the spring of 1985, we began to hear the same rumors Elizabeth Lilla had heard about what was happening at Kenyon College. We received the subscription letter from the editors of the *Gambier Journal* referred to by Mrs. Lilla, and later we read the lively articles about the controversies at Kenyon in the *Journal*. As alumni loyal to the college and its curriculum, we felt that the allegations concerning the corruption of the curriculum by the administration and some of the faculty raised in the pages of the *Journal* deserved further investigation. So in order to determine what was going on at Kenyon we spent a considerable amount of time speaking to or corresponding with members of the faculty as well as recent graduates.

Our efforts were quite independent of Mrs. Lilla's. In fact, we were not aware of Mrs. Lilla's investigation and article until after we had conducted our own investigation and reached our own conclusions. Based on our inquiry into events at the college, we agree with the entire thrust of Mrs. Lilla's article, and we would like to supplement it with the following remarks. . . .

Recently, the philosophy department at Kenyon had a tenure-track position open for which it was seeking applicants. The department had decided to seek a candidate who specialized in two of four general areas: 19th-century philosophy, the philosophy of religion, the philosophy of social sciences, and Oriental philosophy. A member of the administration then urged the department to add the "philosophy of feminism" to the list; the depart-

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ment complied, although some members protested. . . . The rationale for the change was that it would "increase the applicant pool to include more women" and, it was hoped, "increase the likelihood that a woman would be hired." . . .

It should be pointed out that the philosophy department at Kenyon, which consists of six persons, already has *two* faculty members who claim to specialize in the "philosophy of feminism." Furthermore, . . . the college's own guidelines for employment, as set forth in the revised Faculty Handbook, state:

> *No criteria of sex*, ethnic origin, marital status, or family affiliation shall influence the evaluation of applicants. [Emphasis added.]

Thus an applicant's sex and background in feminism have now become of paramount importance in the hiring process at Kenyon College, despite the needs of the department and the college guidelines.

The president and other members of the administration and its supporters among the faculty are fond of claiming that the administration's actions have the overwhelming support of the faculty. They point to the relatively small number of faculty who have publicly objected to the direction being taken by the college. What is either denied or left unmentioned are the Machiavellian tactics used by the administration to coerce support and stifle dissent among faculty members. We have received confidential communications from a number of faculty, representing at least nine different departments, all of whom complain of administrative pressure to conform. . . .

We have found that there is a strong perception among faculty, especially among untenured faculty, that the administration is quite willing to use its considerable powers to support its friends and punish those whom it deems its enemies. For example, when we met with the then-chairman of the faculty to discuss the recent events at the college, he recounted to us many instances in which untenured and visiting members of the faculty complained privately to him about the provost and other members of the administration who "strongly encouraged" them to incorporate feminism into their curricula. Because of the position of young, untenured, and visiting faculty members, the effects of this "encouragement" are too obvious to belabor.

We were also told of a situation where an ardent supporter of the administration and a radical feminist was given tenure by the administration over the objection of senior members of the department. As we understand it, this is highly irregular. At the same time, we were informed that another member of the same department who was not sufficiently ardent in her support of the administration was harassed by the administration until she left the college. . . .

The administration has not been above retaliating against an entire department when that department has not been sufficiently supportive of its agenda. Witness the actions taken against the political-science department. The political-science department at Kenyon has eschewed trendy, ideological issues and focused on the disinterested study of the more timeless philosophical subjects, providing students with a solid philosophical basis from which to study political issues. The department's approach is inherently different from the ideological feminism which is encouraged by the administration at Kenyon, and the department has resisted the actions of the administration. . . .

Last spring, the administration refused to hire the department's choice for a tenure-track position. When the department refused to accept a candidate supported by the administration for the same position, the administration responded by refusing to hire anyone, and also refusing to rehire two visiting political-science professors. . . . The net result of this action was a 25-percent cut in the staffing of the political-science department. If implemented, it would have forced the department to curtail course offerings to students drastically. It was only after vociferous condemnation of this action by alumni and students, and a lengthy investigation by a faculty committee, that the administration backed down and permitted the rehiring of the two visiting professors. In doing so, however, it made only a small concession because while it allowed the visiting professors to return for one year, it demoted them and denied them a vote in faculty meetings. The administration's actions constitute a clear message to other departments which might refuse to support its agenda. . . .

Finally, we believe that women's studies at Kenyon, so well depicted by Mrs. Lilla, is actually a symptom of a more serious problem. . . . At Kenyon, "the right-think bandwagon," to use one professor's phrase, happens to be radical feminism, though no doubt other academic institutions and faculties have their own pet ideologies. What is most unfortunate is the fact that there seems to be a growing number of academics at Kenyon and elsewhere who feel that proselytizing in the classroom is perfectly acceptable, and, indeed, necessary. . . .

Although it is serious, we do not believe that the damage done to Kenyon by this administration and its supporters among faculty members is irreversible. With the support of alumni and friends of the college and with continuous pressure on college trustees, we hope that positive changes at Kenyon are not beyond hope.

RICHARD BAEHR, JULIA MARLOWE,
DIANA SCHAUB, JEFFREY SMITH,
SCOTT UNIVER, LAUREN WEINER,
HENRY P. WICKHAM, JR.
The Committee for Liberal
Education at Kenyon
Columbus, Ohio

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Elizabeth Lilla provides a vivid illustration of a problem currently endemic within American higher education: the deformation of traditional canons of teaching and scholarship to suit the purposes of radical activism. As she demonstrates in the case of Kenyon, the leaders in this process are academics rather than students. While this represents a break with the pattern of the 60's, it is the natural consequence of the events of that decade.

During the 60's an exceptionally large cohort of university students were absorbed into the political culture of the Left and the enthusiasms that it spawned. Many of them chose to make careers for themselves within higher education, careers which were facilitated by an unprecedented wave of institutional expansion. This academic generation, now entering full professional maturity, is gaining a considerable hand in the governance of departments, programs, and whole institutions. Moreover, their views decisively shape the ideological climate on most campuses. The result can be situations like that at Kenyon.

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What is unusual about Kenyon is the sweep of the effort to harness the entire curriculum to the feminist agenda, and the sturdiness of the resistance. At most institutions the "mainstreaming" of radical pedagogy tends to be a collaborative activity of like-minded faculty spread throughout the academic structure, with the top administration playing a legitimizing rather than a driving role. Because this is often accomplished through changes in lecture content or reading assignments, it may not always find full reflection in the formal descriptions of courses and programs. More traditional faculty, without the stomach for a fight, can thus find excuses not to notice, while alumni, and the public at large, are kept in the dark.

On the other hand, some of the efforts to mask advocacy as education have received visible institutional expression, taking the form of programs of instruction in which "consciousness-raising" is at least as important as the acquisition of knowledge. "Peace Studies" and ethnic-studies programs can generally be placed alongside women's studies in this category. A count of such programs conveys a sense of the magnitude of the phenomenon. For example, according to the National Women's Studies Institute, 476 women's-studies programs were in place as of 1984, buttressed by at least 25 journals of feminist "scholarship." The number of programs is believed to have since grown substantially. The World Policy Institute records 235 college "peace-studies" programs offering majors or minors (up from 180 last year), involving between 17 to 23 faculty apiece, and comprising a total of some 3,000 courses. Black Studies seems to have undergone a contraction since its heyday in the 70's, but, according to the National Council for Black Studies, it is still represented by some 350 college programs, associated with over 15 journals.

The travails of Kenyon document the dangers to education posed by the new intellectual orthodoxies and the pseudo-disciplines they have produced. Elizabeth Lilla and the dissident faculty and students at Kenyon College are to be commended for their exposure of these unpleasant academic realities.

STEPHEN H. BALCH
Campus Coalition
for Democracy
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Elizabeth Lilla's article confirms my worst fears—that those outside Gambier got an exceedingly skewed image of what was going on at Kenyon College last spring. I was a student at Kenyon at the time; allow me to clarify the picture for those too distant to see any but its broadest outlines.

As far as women's studies goes, it seems odd that one interdisciplinary course with a handful of students and a library shelf of about 100 volumes should be seen as such a threat to academic freedom. Odder still are the staunch defenders of liberal arts, on campus and off, who praise critical analysis and free thought, yet who are trying to prevent free feminist thought from critically analyzing liberal arts. Women's studies at Kenyon was a *course*, not a rebellion, and feminism there is not an administrative inquisition—it is a call from a diverse group of community members for a reassessment of women's roles in society, and in the academy.

The editors of the *Gambier Journal* saw it as more; no one denied them the right to do so. Until, that is, they started bending (and breaking) the rules. They finagled an alumni mailing list by providing an innocuous subscription letter for approval. Upon obtaining the list, they substituted their "militant-feminists" letter for the original.

When this dubious practice was under investigation (by a board of students, faculty, and administration), it was discovered that the editors had skirted the *Journal*'s constitution at least twice: in refusing to publish an article until it was rewritten to reflect their own opinions; and, more importantly, in their own ascension to editorship. When it was proven that they had not been fairly elected to their editorial positions, the rest of the charges became moot. They were removed from the *Journal*. It should be pointed out that at this time the *Journal* was funded by the college and was under an obligation to follow the rules set for all college publications.

The *Journal* has since been incorporated, and the college has chosen not to pursue a lawsuit (which the student government had approved) against the incorporation. The administration allows the new *Gambier Journal* to be distributed in dormitories, which no other non-college publication may do. There have been claims of administrative harassment, but since no formal complaints or charges have been lodged, we must assume the claims to be unfounded.

Granted, some people at Kenyon are "militant feminists." Granted, too, we must be careful not to allow any critical voice to be itself exempt from criticism—but that should include both women's studies and the *Gambier Journal*, both of which have been given a fair chance at Kenyon College.

PAUL B. SINGER
Arlington, Virginia

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As the parent of a Kenyon freshman, I was dismayed to read the singularly ill-tempered article by Elizabeth Lilla. The article is so full of contempt for women's studies, so intolerant of genuine discussion about the parameters of a liberal-arts education, so rich in innuendoes, and so ungenerous to all concerned that one can only wonder what animus against Kenyon College, or women's studies, prompted her to write it. . . .

Is it irony, contempt, or a misguided sense of humor that motivates this sentence: "To continue on Kenyon's traditional course might be noble or rewarding, but it would hardly win the school (or its new president) national attention. Perhaps, though, something could be added to make Kenyon College competitive with its more fashionable counterparts, to bring it closer to the cutting edge?" Mrs. Lilla contradicts herself in the next paragraph, where she maintains that "What is surely on the cutting edge today is women's studies. Both as a field of its own and as a cross-disciplinary enterprise, women's studies is firmly established in many top universities. . . ." But what is firmly established cannot be on the cutting edge, or so it would seem. Also, why does she consider "worrisome" the hiring of a new provost (whose convocation speech, by the way, was one of the best of its kind I have heard in over thirty years of working in institutions of higher learning) and the submission of a grant proposal to the NEH to set up a women's-studies program?

Is Mrs. Lilla so convinced that she is an expert on what constitutes a liberal-arts education that any discussion of its focus or direction is heretical? Is it not important that those who claim to educate the young take time to examine the

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premises and convictions that underlie their teaching? Is it really inconceivable that all knowledge is presented from a point of view—and that the best we can do is examine self-consciously the perspective of our own truths? . . .

I have visited Kenyon several times. I have met some members of the faculty and the administration and a number of my daughter's friends. It is hard to believe that the lively, intelligent, and confident intellectual community of Kenyon College could be so misrepresented.

EVA R. GOSSMAN
Princeton, New Jersey

ELIZABETH LILLA writes:

While I am naturally distressed to find that so many Kenyon College faculty members have taken issue with my article, I am heartened by the tone of their letter; this is without doubt the most temperate statement to have emerged from the school in recent years. Unfortunately, however, the letter also displays the same rhetorical tactics found in many of the documents I cited in my article, and a number of factual errors as well.

1. "The faculty has been consistently supportive of women's studies." This is simply not the case. In my interview with the provost when I was conducting research for my article, he himself admitted that "If I could do it all over again I would be more cognizant of the traditional nature of the institution and the best ways to achieve faculty input. I had no administrative experience before this, and I didn't bargain for this response." If, as this letter insists, the faculty had been so "consistently supportive" of the introduction of women's studies, why would the provost have wished, as he also said, that he had taken "more time" and been "more deliberate in seeking wider faculty input" so that women's studies could have been kept from "blowing up in our faces"?

2. "[T]he faculty voted to send the women's-studies proposal to the NEH by more than a 2-to-1 margin (the vote was 77-36)." The signers of this letter omit what is probably the most significant fact about the NEH application (requesting funds for the women's-studies course and for incorporating the "new scholarship on women" into the curriculum): the administration had no intention of letting the faculty see it. It knew full well how controversial the proposals would be, and it wished to circumvent the faculty and submit the document directly to NEH. One individual, though, who had been privy to the drafting of the proposal, decided that the curricular reforms it suggested were too drastic not to be shared with the faculty, and he personally copied and distributed the document. It was only in response to the ensuing outrage that the administration sought a vote from the faculty. What was remarkable about that vote—as anyone familiar with academic life will appreciate—is not that the measure was approved by a "2-to-1 margin," but that at a tiny college a *third* of those voting refused to endorse what was clearly a pet project of their school's president and provost.

3. "The proposal concerning the director of Women's Academic Concerns was submitted to the administration carrying the signatures of 25 women faculty members and administrators. This represents not only the vast majority of women faculty members, but nearly one-quarter of the entire faculty." Twenty-one out of those 25 were faculty members; 21 out of 40 hardly constitutes a "vast majority." Again, however, what is revealing about the statistic is that half the women faculty at Kenyon would have the courage *not* to sign such a proposal—an act that involves, among other things, becoming subject to the charge of being anti-woman (or as the feminists at Kenyon like to say, being a "male-woman"). Incidentally, 21 signers would constitute a *seventh*, not a fourth, of the total faculty at Kenyon.

4. "Thirty-two is a large enrollment at Kenyon. The average class only has 15-20 students. . . ." I am well aware that class size at Kenyon is very small; that's one reason I went there, and one thing that has helped make it a fine school. But there is a difference between *class* and *course* enrollment. Many courses at Kenyon are quite large indeed; one would especially expect this to be the case for a course—like women's studies—that claims to appeal to the entire student body. The signers of this letter also skirt my more important point: that enrollment in the women's-studies course continually declined, dropping to a mere seven students (with no accompanying decline, one should add, in the resources devoted to the course). The letter explains that "many interested Kenyon students simply cannot fit the course into their schedule." This statement is meaningless, since it could apply equally to every course offered at the college. And it does not account for the fact that, at a time when only seven out of 1,400 warm-blooded post-adolescents chose to sign up for a class on gender and the relations between the sexes, 38 students managed to "fit" into their schedules another interdisciplinary course—on the Holocaust.

5. "[T]his year's women's-studies course on the family is overenrolled." The faculty who signed this letter neglect to mention that nowhere in the course catalogue is the phrase "women's studies" used in conjunction with this course; it is quite possible that the course received a decent enrollment simply because it did not bear that stigma. The whole episode, indeed, bears out what the provost told me in our conversation: that the main thing he learned from the controversy surrounding the introduction of women's studies was the need to integrate it subtly into other courses.

It is a sad commentary on the situation at Kenyon that, of the 75 or so faculty who chose not to sign the above letter, only four—Carl Brehm, Richard B. Hoppe, Robert H. Horwitz, and Thomas Short—have been willing to dissent publicly. But though these four individuals may be few in number they are large in spirit, and I am grateful for their public support, as well as for the additional points they make regarding pressures to conform at Kenyon.

I was until very recently unaware of a group called the Committee for Liberal Education at Kenyon (I was certainly ignorant of it at the time I was writing my article), but I am pleased to learn of its existence now, and wish it much luck in restoring Kenyon to its former dignity. The committee's letter clearly details the extent of the administration's commitment to feminist doctrine and to the general notion of education as being, in some way, a political enterprise. Both this letter and that of the Campus Coalition for Democracy raise important points that help place the recent events at Kenyon in the proper larger context of the overall politicization of the academy. I especially appreciate the awareness on the part of these

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groups that criticism of one's alma mater need not be construed as mere nay-saying, but can arise out of love and admiration for an institution, and despair at seeing it gone awry.

Paul B. Singer's letter contains detailed criticisms of the running of last year's *Gambier Journal*. As I am not in a position to address the specific legal and procedural questions he raises, I suggest he take these up directly with the former editors of the paper.

My compliments to Eva R. Gossman for managing to incorporate the words "contempt," "intolerant," "innuendoes," "ungenerous," and "animus" into one sentence. I take issue, though, with her suggestion that I am not interested in "genuine discussion about the parameters of a liberal-arts education." On the contrary, that was precisely what motivated me to write my article.

Mrs. Gossman raises a crucial issue when she asks, "Is it not important that those who claim to educate the young take time to examine the premises and convictions that underlie their teaching?" The question as posed has such a natural, commonsensical ring to it that it seems downright barbaric to answer no. Had the question been asked about *methods* of teaching, I would certainly have answered in the affirmative. But isn't the whole point about premises that they provide the parameters (to use Mrs. Gossman's word) *within* which one adapts, changes, and innovates? To draw on a familiar analogy: is it not possible that just as there are certain requisites for being a good parent, there may be certain requisites for being a good teacher—for example, that one refrain from imposing one's own political, religious, and other personal views on one's students?

This may seem a retrograde position to take at a time when all sorts of radical criticism are the norm in the academy. I am well aware—with Mrs. Gossman and Nietzsche—that "all knowledge is presented from a point of view," and that "the best we can do is examine self-consciously the perspective of our own truths." But while this may be true for the practice of philosophy and for individual reflection, it is hardly a desirable operating premise for anyone involved in the task of passing on knowledge. More importantly, Mrs. Gossman overlooks the fact that what takes place in most women's-studies courses is not even this kind of radical philosophical skepticism—which can at least be intellectually honest and rigorous—but simply the transmission of a whole new slate of truths. And the word for *that* is indoctrination.

Saudi Arabia

To the Editor of Commentary:

"Execution Day in Riyadh" by Clifford Hallam [February] was read with great interest by my wife and me. We lived in Saudi Arabia for almost three years, leaving in September 1985. . . .

Most expatriates in Saudi Arabia hear about the various forms of corporal punishment still in use, and are shocked to learn of them. The mildest form is lashing and the ultimate, of course, is decapitation. Unlike Mr. Hallam and most of our colleagues in Taif where we lived, we did not attend any of these Friday massacres. But it seems so incongruous that these bloodlettings should follow the most important religious event of the week in a Muslim country that prays five times *every* day. . . .

The injustice of the Sharia court is unbelievable to Westerners since there are no witnesses, evidence, lawyers, or disciplined court procedures. The punishment is final and even includes non-Saudis.

Our airport experiences from first to last were perfectly described in Mr. Hallam's statement about never having been made to feel less welcome "in any country, city, neighborhood, public building, or workplace." The hostility by unkempt, unshaven, rude soldiers is palpable and threatening. It makes you feel instant doubt and concern about why you came to such a place.

The savaging of luggage cannot be described. Everything is suspect. Our daughters had video cassettes taken and reviewed for pornographic material. . . . Once my medical slides were destroyed while I watched. Another time some photos of camels were removed and not returned. No explanation.

Dealing with officialdom is close to degrading. Obtaining an *igama* (passport) or driver's license requires much paper work, many visits, waiting, and tolerating a studied insolence. . . .

On one unforgettable occasion we returned from a vacation to discover that one of the many incompetents at the hospital in which I worked had failed to stamp our daughter's passport with a reentry visa. This stamp is . . . required in order to be readmitted into the country. . . . During the next several hours we were herded about, feeling like criminals, pleading to speak with anyone in English who might help. . . . After a very loud, very lengthy, and very exasperating discussion a signature finally ended the problem. My daughter's age was fifteen. Treatment such as this would not be tolerated in any civilized part of the world. . . .

The use of cameras is forbidden —anywhere. Either the camera or the film is confiscated, especially by a group of religious police (*mata-wah*) who are self-appointed and have great power to do as they please.

Before concluding, I must mention the fear of Israel and the anti-Semitism that exists. My *Time* magazine, when I could find one, had all or parts of articles on Israel removed or blacked out. . . . Ford autos and Coca-Cola cannot be found. Reason: they both have plants in Israel. . . .

The recent drop in the price of oil, the distrust among members of OPEC, and a society that still believes in decapitation all contribute to one's doubts about the future of Saudi Arabia.

William H. Brown, M.D.
Wyman Park Health System
Baltimore, Maryland

Oral Roberts

To the Editor of Commentary:

I think Terry Teachout's review of *Oral Roberts* by David Edwin Harrell, Jr. [Books in Review, February] is an excellent and fair-minded assessment of the book—not an easy thing to do with such a controversial personality and movement. I would like to point out, however, that the author is at the University of Alabama, not Atlanta as stated in the review.

Kathleen Ketterman
Indiana University Press
Bloomington, Indiana

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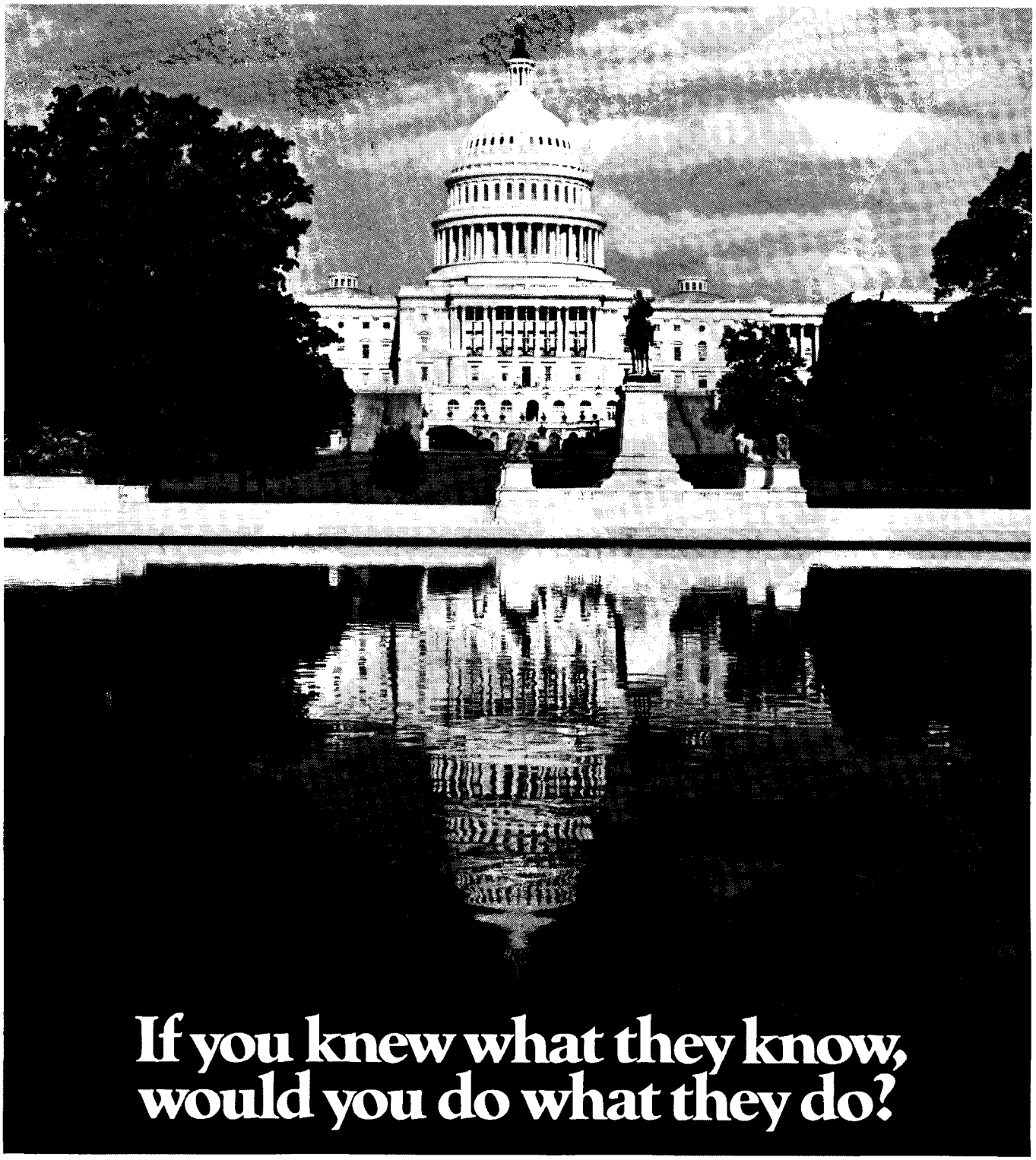

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How SDI Is Being Undone From Within

Angelo M. Codevilla

A people without walls is a people without any choice.

—Aristotle, *Politics*, Book 7, Chapter 11

PROTECTION against enemy attack is not just a military necessity. It is a political imperative. Aristotle and many after him have recognized that a country may sometimes leave its borders undefended, trusting in the ability of its armed forces to deter, or defeat, the enemy in battle. But Aristotle also recognized that this is not only militarily risky but, above all, politically unhealthy. Peoples, especially democratic ones, who are asked to live out their lives on the edge of destruction either become excessively tempted into making preemptive attacks or, enervated by the tension, give themselves up to flights of fancy. So Aristotle, like other prudent politicians before and after him, counseled reliance on the best protection available. In Aristotle's time, that meant walls. He offered this counsel, remarkably enough, while noting that the technology available for breaching walls had just improved dramatically.

Popular opinion in the U.S. has always been on Aristotle's side. But for much of a generation, the opinion of those who exercise influence over American foreign and defense policies has been quite the contrary. Thus, unbeknownst for the most part to the American people, the U.S. has been thoroughly bereft of defenses against Soviet missiles and bombers. So long as our offensive forces were clearly superior to the Soviet Union's, few influential Americans worried about this. But when the Soviets became able to do more harm to the United States than the United States could do to the Soviet Union, and when the Soviet Union acquired the means to disarm many of our means of doing it harm, some influential Americans did begin worrying enough to reconsider our need for protection.

Indeed, as the 1970's ended, these Americans concluded that the Soviet Union had built such a commanding lead in strategic offensive forces that the only chance for the free world to avoid permanent Soviet military hegemony was to do what most people (mistakenly) believed was already being done: build strategic defenses.

This strategic awakening occurred just as changes in technology were providing unprecedented ways of destroying missiles and bombers in flight and on the ground. It occurred also at a time when no one in the mainstream of public opinion any longer denied that fifteen years of the arms-control process had left the American people not safer, but less safe. By the early 1980's, not even the most ardent advocates of arms control contended that the Soviet Union could be made to abide by future agreements more faithfully than it had done in the immediately preceding period, during which it had used the negotiating process as a screen for its drive to military superiority. By the early 1980's, then, strategic defense seemed to be not just a good way out of the American strategic predicament, but the only way.

Beginning in 1980, Senator Malcolm Wallop (R-Wyo) and his congressional allies were able to structure a set of programs in the Defense Department which produced some of the key hardware that might be involved in space-based anti-missile defense. They publicized the promise of new space-defense technologies and betweeen 1980 and 1982 won several votes on the floor of the Senate actually to build space laser weapons. Hence, by the time Ronald Reagan announced a turn toward strategic defense in his speech of March 23, 1983, important components of anti-missile weapons, both ground-based and space-based, were already under development, and the idea had had a rather successful political test-marketing.

Yet while the turn toward a Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) was caused by recognition of the nation's strategic predicament, the White House and the Defense Department quickly defined SDI as research into technology that might or might not be useful after the year 2000—but surely not by any time on which we could immediately plan. In other words, they defined SDI as an open question. This effectively detoured discussion from the essential question: how shall we meet our urgent need for protection *now*?

Certainly, in any enterprise, one might always wish that there were more effective tools available. But the difference in human contests is always made by the materials on hand. In military mat-

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ters, especially for a country like the U.S., which leaves to others the choice of when to make war, it is very dangerous indeed to wait for better weapons in the future while one's enemies build weapons in the present which they deem good enough. In fact, the Soviet Union is not only widening its lead in usable offensive missiles, but anti-missile devices are also already rolling off Soviet production lines, and the 1980's will see Soviet high-energy lasers in space. To count on the forbearance of a superior Soviet military while the U.S. plays Hamlet would be suicidal self-indulgence.

It is therefore important to examine how and why the U.S. government over the years has spurned the means at hand to develop anti-missile defenses in favor of utopian arms-control initiatives and research into anti-missile systems defined always as beyond our grasp. As we proceed with such an examination, we will find that today's situation differs little from previous ones except for urgency, and that the deep-rooted U.S. commitment against defensive weapons can be reversed only by changing men, budgets, and organization.

THE temptation to treat new weapons irrationally is perennial. We laugh too easily at the medieval politicians who saw crossbows and gunpowder as harbingers of the end, at their military commanders who either dismissed them or thought there could be no defense against them, and at their legal advisers who tried to outlaw them. In our own century, the airplane, then the nuclear bomb, and finally the ballistic missile have provoked similar reactions.

Thus, before World War II, there developed the triple assumption that "the bomber will always get through," that its natural target would be the mass of humanity in cities, and that its primary effect would be not to destroy military targets but to inflict punishment on populations. Consequently, Winston Churchill had to fight uphill battles in order to divert some resources away from bomber forces, seen as threats of indiscriminate destruction and therefore useful for deterring Germany, toward the interceptor aircraft necessary for defending Britain.

In spite of prewar assumptions, however, the experiences of the war itself left no doubt that indiscriminate destruction did not pay and that air defenses could be very effective. Air defense, for example, saved Britain and sealed the fate of the German army at Stalingrad. And with the advent of nuclear bombs, air defense came to seem even more important. Accordingly, between 1950 and 1960 the U.S. built and manned a huge defense system consisting of radars and interceptor aircraft and missiles—a system employing directly some 250,000 people and costing some 200 billion of today's dollars.

To say that this system was entirely effective is not to say that it was possible, by 1960, to guarantee that no Soviet bomber could have dropped a single bomb on an American city. The purpose of any defense is not to preclude irrational acts such as the sacrifice of an entire military force for the sake of destroying a single militarily meaningless objective. Rather, the purpose of any defensive system, whether against mounted knights or Napoleonic armies or nuclear weapons, is to make it very unlikely that an attacker can achieve any results that are worth the trouble. By this practical standard, the U.S. air-defense system succeeded completely. The Soviet Union provided double confirmation of this by ceasing large-scale production of bombers in the late 1950's. It resumed such production only in the 1970's, *after* the U.S. had totally dismantled its air-defense system. By 1980, if the Soviets wished to bomb the U.S., new bombers were not really needed. Cargo planes would do.

In contrast, by 1980, the Soviets' own air-defense system had long since put the United States out of the business of even *considering* high-altitude penetration of Soviet airspace. The old American B-52 bomber force had been reduced to launching long-range cruise missiles, and the new American bomber, the B-1, was designed to attempt penetration at treetop level, in the hope of gaining momentary advantage over the newest tower-mounted Soviet phased-array radar and its associated SA-10 missile.

ALL OF which is to say that the U.S. knows, from having to work against them, how well air defenses can work. Why then does the U.S. have virtually none?

The reasons follow from the utopian sentiments which nuclear weapons have awakened among American intellectuals and politicians. In the military field, this utopian response came within weeks of Hiroshima in the form of Bernard Brodie's book, *The Absolute Weapon*. Although he never denied that prudent preparations for dealing with nuclear attack would significantly affect its results, Brodie assumed that nuclear weapons would be targeted primarily on cities, and that it would be impossible to avoid total destruction. Despite the many contradictions it contained and the many questions it left unanswered, little by little Brodie's thesis became the intellectual currency of American military leaders.

For the first fifteen years of the nuclear era American military supremacy was so great, and American military leaders faced so few momentous choices, that their verbal adherence to the tenets of *The Absolute Weapon* hardly mattered. America could deliver many bombs on the Soviet Union, while the Soviet Union could hardly deliver any weapons on the U.S. For the U.S. the danger was theoretical.

All this changed when, *circa* 1960, the prospect arose that the Soviet Union could bypass our air defenses by lobbing ballistic missiles at us. Faced

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with this new vulnerability and relying on the new Atlas, Titan, and Minuteman missiles as well as on the new reconnaissance satellites which pinpointed Soviet missile bases, President Kennedy's Secretary of Defense, Robert S. McNamara, declared:

> The United States has come to the conclusion that to the extent feasible, basic military strategy in a possible general war should be approached in much the same way that more conventional military operations are. That is to say, principal military objectives in the event of a nuclear war should be the destruction of the enemy's military forces, not his civilian population.

Of course at this time McNamara took no action to diminish U.S. air defenses or to interfere with the effort to develop defenses against missiles. The purpose of these, after all, was to limit damage to the United States.

Yet beginning in 1963, McNamara changed his mind, and also the shape of the U.S. military. Whether McNamara was impressed by his aides' commitment to the tenets of the "absolute weapon," or frightened by the Cuban missile crisis, or desirous of cutting the strategic forces' share of the budget to fight the Vietnam war, his purpose ceased to be the limitation of damage in case of nuclear war. Instead it now became the avoidance of such a war through the policy of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD).

Thus when, in late 1963, it became clear that the Soviet Union was going to emplace its new ballistic missiles in blast-resistant silos, the U.S. faced a decision: should we target them? The answer from McNamara's Pentagon was no. He later explained that our safety rested on our willingness to "destroy the attacker as a viable 20th-century nation," and not from any "ability to partially limit damage to ourselves."

Defining the appropriate level of destruction was a problem. Pentagon analysts sought the "flat of the curve," that is, the number of Soviet cities hit, after which hitting another would cost more than the damage inflicted. Give or take a little, McNamara settled on a figure:

> . . . I would judge that a capability on our part to destroy say one-fifth to one-fourth of her population, and one-half of her industrial capacity would serve as an effective deterrent. Such a level of destruction would certainly represent intolerable punishment for a 20th-century industrial nation.

His calculations about the Soviet Union did not take into account a very different value system from our own, and his calculations about the damage our weapons would cause were proved wrong in tests by the Boeing Corporation. But right or wrong, McNamara not only explicitly took up the "absolute weapon" rhetoric of the Eisenhower officials he had once criticized; he now *acted* in a way that was wholly consistent with the rhetoric. He made U.S. missiles incapable of striking Soviet missiles. He oriented American targeting toward populations. He phased out the U.S. air-defense system. And he worked to prevent an American anti-missile system from coming into being.

Yet no knowledgeable person in the 1960's denied that radars and missiles existed which could intercept incoming missiles. The very first radar "discrimination" of a warhead from other materials accompanying it had occurred in 1958. By 1962, when the Soviets had only 14 ICBM's, our Nike Zeus anti-missile system had intercepted a warhead. By the mid-1960's Robert McNamara was conceding in congressional testimony that the even newer Nike-X system could have effectively protected every urban area in the U.S. as well as our military bases. But as Harold Brown, then McNamara's Undersecretary for Research and Development (R & D), testified: "The decision on Nike X will not be made, or should not be made, merely on the basis of technical capability. That is, even though the system does what we say it will do, that does not mean necessarily that we should deploy the system." (Why not? Because the Soviets could always explode nuclear warheads upwind of populated areas—for example in the Mojave desert—and spread radioactive dust.)

Thus when McNamara told the Congress in 1968 that "defense of our cities against a Soviet attack would be a futile waste of our resources," he was expressing a judgment not about what *could be* done to defend against ballistic missiles but about what was *worthwhile doing*. This judgment, which the public mistook as a technical one, ultimately led American leaders to reject protection against ballistic missiles in favor of the ABM treaty of 1972 prohibiting such protection.

By 1979, however, even as President Carter was signing the SALT II treaty, no one could, or did, argue that the objectives for the sake of which the U.S. had seven years earlier signed SALT I and the ABM treaty had been achieved. Through SALT I, the "best and the brightest" of the American establishment thought they had persuaded the Soviets to refrain, in accordance with the theory of MAD, from any attempts to defend themselves by preparing to destroy our missiles on the ground, as well as in flight. Now, by 1979, it was obvious, even to the CIA and to Harold Brown, one of the architects of MAD and now Carter's Secretary of Defense, that the Soviets had never ceased making preparations for self-protection, at least through counterforce strikes—that is, preemptive attacks on American missiles.

The specter of "Minuteman vulnerability," which has haunted the Pentagon from afar since the mid-60's, and which SALT I had supposedly exorcised, was thus now a reality. Little by little the Soviets had acquired the ability to take out

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our land-based missile force in a first strike. But what to do about it? The answer, in terms of MAD, lay either in making our own offensive forces more "survivable" or in preparing to "launch on warning." "Launch on warning" was deemed too dangerous a policy (since it might mean the initiation of a nuclear war by accident). Therefore the MAD orientation necessarily led to an enormous effort to find a survivable basing mode for the Minuteman's proposed successor, the MX, a 200,000-pound missile, whose size precludes significant mobility.*

Even if a significant portion of President Carter's proposed 200 MX's could have been assured survival, the United States would still have found itself in a world far more ominous than that which the architects of SALT had foreseen in 1972. The models of "stable equality" so popular in those days did not envisage that the Soviet Union would have a near-monopoly of counterforce missiles, *plus* reserve nuclear forces far superior in number and dispersion and yield to those of the U.S.—forces that the U.S. could not hope to reduce meaningfully after having absorbed a first strike. No one contended that the 200 MX's proposed by President Carter would change this predicament significantly.

Nor, by 1979, could anyone be found who would argue in public (as Gerard Smith did in 1972) that the Soviets had agreed, in the new treaty, to solve our strategic problems for us. Although the Carter administration carefully avoided charging the Soviet Union with violations of SALT I, it had to admit that the Soviets had wholly circumvented its basic purpose. Moreover although SALT II's advocates maintained that the Soviets would not violate it, they could not explain why the Soviets would be more faithful to the new agreement than they had been to the old.

Hence, in 1979, the choice was between hoping against hope that through SALT II and the arms-control process a bad situation might not become much worse, and advocating that the United States match the Soviet Union in numbers of missiles. Few Americans outside the extremes of the political Left and Right felt comfortable with those alternatives. The first amounted to an indefinite surrender of military supremacy to the Soviet Union, while the second appeared to be a race in which the Soviets had already moved out of reach, with five open ICBM production lines as compared with none in the U.S.

In addition, some of the most scrupulous analysts of intelligence noted that the Soviet Union was building the huge radars necessary for a nationwide anti-missile system; perfecting both the interceptors and the small radars such a system would require; developing a state-of-the-art air-defense missile system (we now know it as the SA-12), each unit of which could defend against at least a small number of American warheads; and acquiring the elements of space-based laser systems. The Soviets, it seemed, might be on the way to doing to the ABM treaty what they had done to SALT I. How could the U.S. live with a Soviet Union possessed of a superior counterforce sword *and* a budding monopoly of anti-missile shields?

The obvious way out of this political and strategic predicament was to devalue the Soviets' huge lead in ballistic missiles, as well as the sacrifices that a generation of Russians had made to build them, by devising defenses against them. This reasoning led several Senators, and several strategic thinkers as well, to go looking for the necessary technology. It was not, in other words, the appearance of new technology that renewed interest in defense. Rather, a heightened realization of danger, combined with a lack of viable alternatives, led to a closer examination of the technology available for defense.

THAT technology, in a nutshell, allowed the following:

Large, ground-based radars could see tiny warheads and decoys thousands of miles away, and their computers could perform enough calculations to distinguish substantially between the two. They could also track the warheads, divide the track files into "bundles" according to destination, and transmit the bundles to the appropriate engagement radars. Detection and discrimination could also be done by electro-optical devices, either on satellites, or probes shot into space, or on high-flying aircraft. The information, similarly divided, could be sent to engagement radars.†

Already in the late 70's, technology developed for the U.S. space-based intelligence collectors was usable to attack missile boosters soon after they left the atmosphere. Electro-optical devices, extensions of ones in use for missile warning, could see, in detail, the missiles' unmistakable, undecoyable, plumes. The techniques developed to take pictures from space could be adapted to determine where plumes and missiles meet. The mirrors from their telescopes, or larger ones like them properly coated, could focus laser light on the boosters. The computers aboard these intelligence marvels were more than equal to the task of choosing the most convenient target for each defensive satellite to engage, and for keeping every defensive satellite apprised of what every other one was doing. By the end of the 70's, also, it was clear that a 10-megawatt chemical laser could be built.

* The MX is a product of arms control. Restrictions on the number of launchers led the U.S. to pack much capability into each missile, making the MX mobile only on the nation's railroads.

† These, nowadays, can be made small enough to be transportable. Interceptor missiles can now carry much better computers, and therefore are likely to get close enough to their targets not to need nuclear warheads. By lifting an electro-optical probe and a group of miniature homing vehicles far into space in the path of an attack, ground-based defenses can even reach warheads in mid-course.

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It was also clear that technology would continue to progress and in the future might provide not just other kinds of lasers and particle-beam devices for boost-phase defense, but more accurate and reliable ground-based interceptors, earlier and even more perfect discrimination, and more foolproof battle management. Finally, a very great, but conceivable, extrapolation of present sensors and data-processing would allow a sophisticated attack on "clouds" of warheads and decoys in mid-course.

It is essential to reiterate, however, that interest in strategic defense arose in the late 1970's not because of any millennial hope that technology just over the horizon would prevent any Soviet missile from reaching the U.S. Rather, it arose because there was no other way out of our strategic predicament, and because the technology then in hand, if used, would have radically decreased the military and political usefulness of Soviet missiles while providing substantial protection to the American people.

WHILE the popularity of strategic defense was rising in the press and in the Congress, that of the Reagan military build-up, announced with great fanfare in October 1981, was falling. Since that build-up was not conceived either to match or counter Soviet capabilities, and certainly not to protect Americans if war ever came, its advocates never managed to make a great case for it. A year later President Reagan bought time by appointing a commission to study the problem.

On February 11, 1983, during a meeting with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, President Reagan heard the grim news that the strategic gap would continue to widen, and that political support for new missile programs in the country was fast disappearing. Reportedly expressing reasons both political and strategic, Reagan ordered that his next speech on strategic affairs contain a turn to the obvious way out: strategic defense.

As usual, he was not specific. Few who were not in the room knew about the decision. The paragraphs on the subject were drafted in great secrecy by the staff of the National Security Council (NSC). The first draft was a rather specific commitment to build strategic defenses on the ground and in space, "such as" lasers and particle beams. Two days before the speech, these paragraphs were circulated to a wider audience within the military, the Defense Department, and the White House. The overwhelming reaction was negative. Misgivings were expressed about the effects on the Europeans and on arms control, and about the scientific obstacles that lay in the way. As a result, though the original draft's rhetoric was not toned down, the commitment was fuzzed into a call for the best minds in the country to think about a task whose accomplishment was left for an indefinite someday—not at all like John Kennedy's call to put a man on the moon by the end of the 1960's.

The job of defining what the President had said fell to the only people at the higher levels of the White House and the NSC who were acquainted with research and development: the science adviser, George Keyworth, and the deputy National Security Adviser, Robert McFarlane. Keyworth and his staff had argued strongly in Washington against strategic defense. Then, the Sunday after the President's speech, McFarlane said on national television that it had represented a commitment to nothing but research, and that nothing would happen to the U.S. strategic posture in the foreseeable future as a result of it. (Senator Wallop immediately wrote the President to complain about McFarlane's remark, and was assured that McFarlane had not meant what he said.) At the Department of Defense, the task fell to Robert Cooper, the Deputy Undersecretary and director of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), who had striven to reduce pressure from Congress for strategic defense, and had shifted DARPA's work away from weaponry and toward "pure" or "generic" high technology.

Together the White House and Defense Department appointed two committees. By far the more important was headed by James Fletcher, former (and future) director of NASA. The members were carefully chosen to represent the interests of the national laboratories, and of the several parts of the U.S. government involved in R & D. The Fletcher panel's charter directed it to disregard how currently available technology might be made into anti-missile devices, and to consider only advanced technology that would be effective against a "responsive threat" in the long term.

Defining the "responsive threat" is, in the lingo, a "reiterative process." In practice it means that no sooner are technologists able to meet one set of impossible criteria than managers are free to imagine the next set. It also means that one should conceive only of systems with a near-absolute certainty of success. None of this is peculiar to strategic defense. This is how Bradley Fighting Vehicles and $7,000 coffee pots are designed.

In short, the Fletcher panel was mandated to conceive only of systems able to defeat the best imaginable countermeasures.

Perhaps the best example of how the "responsive threat" affected strategic defense was the Fletcher panel's operative assumption that the Soviet missiles to be defeated would be resistant to 100,000 joules/cm^2 of radiant energy—over one thousand times reality! Although no one could justify such a figure with any data, that figure "drove"—and continues to "drive"—the calculations on which SDI is based.

The Fletcher panel also stipulated that each layer of the defensive system should be able to destroy at least 90 percent of the targets coming its way (in the worst of circumstances) so that the system would achieve an overall effectiveness of 99.75 percent against the simultaneous launch of all So-

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viet missiles—not, again, the real Soviet missiles but rather missiles a thousand times "harder" than real ones. There was no room in this directive for the notion that one should worry first about militarily rational threats.

THE report of the Defensive Technologies Study Team (DTST), as the Fletcher panel was called, reflected both its membership and its guidance. A carefully brokered report, it protected the programs of all the parties involved, promised steady increases in research funds available to all, set no deadlines against which anyone's performance might be judged, and foreshadowed no programs that might seriously divert major funds from any existing part of the government. Indeed, by putting off consideration of what to do after preliminary research until the time of future Presidents and future Congresses, it magisterially took from the President for whom it was written the authority ever to do anything about the subject again.

The report's substance was characterized by the recommendation that currently usable technology be laid aside while the most difficult parts of an overall system were developed—namely, the sensors and data-processing required for intercepting missiles in mid-course. These would involve formidable technical challenges because the Fletcher panel defined the task of midcourse sensing and data-processing as the imaging and analysis of every missile, decoy, and piece of debris by space-based radars, infra-red, and laser sensors—all collected and compared in a central processor. The flipside of this recommendation was that no part of the overall system be built before all parts were ready to be built.

Regarding battle management, the report recommended birth-to-death track files for every booster, missile, decoy, and piece of debris identified and transferred through all layers of the system. It also banished nuclear weapons from any role in strategic defense, and devoted serious consideration to mining the moon and inventing "anti-matter beams."

The report, in short, was a caricature of the latter-day American approach to military R & D—the most direct antithesis imaginable of the principle that you should do the best you can with what you've got. Not only did the Fletcher panel say precisely nothing about how the United States might actually defend itself in the foreseeable future; this question did not rate even the smallest mention in its report.

During the late summer of 1983, complaints about the Fletcher panel's "far-out" report received a sympathetic hearing from the National Security Adviser, William Clark. He then ordered a new study, under NSC auspices, to integrate the Fletcher panel's findings with those of another panel under Fred Hoffman, of R & D Associates, Los Angeles. This group had been chosen largely by the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy to examine the policy implications of the President's speech. Although not allowed to touch the vital subject of systems engineering, it focused on the real world, and on what even limited defenses could do for the country. By the time the new, somewhat more present-oriented report reached Clark's desk in October 1983, however, he had been replaced as National Security Adviser by McFarlane, who shared in the consensus that SDI should be soft-pedaled.

THE upshot of all this is that since May 1984—and still to this day—SDI has taken the form of a label applied to a number of preexisting programs of the Defense Department that bear an arguable relationship to strategic defense. The five program elements are as follows, in order of the amount of money and attention being devoted to them:

First is Surveillance, Acquisition, Tracking, and Kill Assessment (SATK). This is "chartered to *explore the technologies* [emphasis added] needed to detect, identify, locate, and track ballistic missiles or their components during the boost, mid-course, and terminal phases of their trajectories." The second program element, Directed Energy, covers the longstanding program in chemical lasers in industry, as well as particle beams, x-ray lasers, and Free Electron Lasers (FEL's) in the national laboratories; the emphasis on ground-based Excimers and FEL's is new, having come with SDI. The third, Kinetic Energy Weapons, covers research on "smart bullets that could be fired from the ground or space." The fourth, Systems Concepts and Battle Management, consists primarily of studies on paper about "how *positive* [emphasis added] command and control might be structured for a defensive system," and also about what a defensive system might consist of. The fifth, Survivability, Lethality, and Key Technologies, covers programs, many new, to explore, largely on paper, but with some experiments, longstanding questions about how key offensive and defensive components could be made resistant to various kinds of attack.

A glance at the organization makes two points evident. First, no part of it has the task, or even the opportunity, to design and develop any weapons system or any part thereof. Such things would require integration of work in all five program elements. Each of the dozen-to-hundreds of parts of each program element necessarily proceeds without a goal, either in the form of a product to which its work would contribute, or of a date by which it must be ready in order to be part of something. Severally and jointly, the parts do not necessarily have any connection with the reality of weaponry.

Indeed, the managers of SDI have gone out of their way to remove such connection to anti-missile weaponry as had earlier existed in the pro-

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grams, and to make sure that none enters in. For example, the original design of the Army's Airborne Optical Adjunct (AOA), a kind of electro-optical device that controls a battle against warheads as an AWACS controls a battle against fighter planes, was ready to fly in 1986. But it had its performance requirements raised, thus necessitating more research. The SDI office also ordered that the AOA's key electro-optical component be split into two parts, and that work proceed wholly apart on the low-power laser device which the AOA uses to find the range of each warhead. Among the reasons for this, and dozens of other similar orders, is the judgment of the SDI office, in cooperation with the Pentagon's and the State Department's lawyers, that to do otherwise could be construed as a violation of the ABM treaty.

So it is that the specter of the ABM treaty and the organization of the SDI program have served to enforce on SDI the "research forever" approach that had been embodied in the guidance to the Fletcher panel.

The second evident point is that as it is structured SDI is indeed, as advertised, "an assessment of technologies and systems that might provide a defense against ballistic missiles . . .," designed to last until the early 1990's when a decision on whether to enter systems development could be made by a future President and a future Congress. It is a set of studies to find out whether certain kinds of anti-missile weapons are feasible and worthwhile according to a set of fantastic criteria.

Thus SDI is, in effect, a decision to postpone until the 1990's any serious consideration of what, if anything, the United States shall do to prevent Soviet missiles, once launched, from landing in the U.S.

This makes little sense. Why investigate whether defenses against ballistic missiles are feasible? Some means are obviously quite feasible. In fact, they are in hand. Others are not in hand, and may never be. Space-based kinetic kill vehicles, possibly using Phoenix or Maverick terminal guidance, are too well-known to be worth testing in a highly abstract mode. It makes sense to build prototypes of operational weapons based on that technology, and then to decide whether or not to mass-produce them. Space-based chemical lasers are in the same position; so is the Airborne Optical Adjunct. The Aegis Radar can provide a basis for an American version of the SA-12. That too is a useful device. The technology to support certain approaches to battle management is also available, while the technology to support birth-to-death, centralized battle management is certainly not available. But why should one wish it to be?

Whether or not any or all of these devices ought to be built is not a technical but a prudential decision, to be made on military and, above all, on *political* grounds. Unfortunately, the premise of SDI in 1986 is that no military or political choice will be available until the mid-1990's. That, of course, is true with regard to some devices and approaches. But the bureaucracy works mightily to give the impression that it is true of all devices and of all reasonable approaches to ballistic-missile defense.

Nor will the decision, now put off to the 1990's, be any more technical in character then than it is today. Without doubt, in the early 90's, notions of the "responsive threat" will have evolved at least as much as the technology in U.S. hands to meet that threat. No doubt, too, we will then be able to conceive of even superior technology that might be in our hands ten years hence.

IN SUM, whether or not technology is acceptable depends on our definition of the threat, and on our perception of the necessity of dealing with it.* For example, the Soviet Union decided in favor of counterforce missiles long before it could build SS-18's and SS-24's. It decided that our Nike-X was a feasible and worthwhile thing before it could build anything like it, and just as Americans, having built it, were deciding it was an unfeasible instrument of defense.

The Americans who, in the late 1970's, perceived the imminence of overwhelming and usable Soviet military superiority and wanted to build strategic defensive weapons as the only way to negate it, judged the available technologies acceptable, according to criteria very different from those of the Fletcher panel. Their judgments regarding the feasibility of strategic defenses are not any more or less *technically* worthy than those of the Fletcher panel and the SDI's management. Reputable people work from precisely the same technical data base. There are vast differences in the facts that each side chooses to emphasize, but disagreements on facts and figures themselves are rare. The differences lie in strategic and political perspectives.

The fact is that, for a variety of reasons, neither the White House nor the Pentagon is particularly eager to build strategic defenses. That is why SDI, as currently structured, does absolutely nothing for the foreseeable future to alter a military balance rapidly shifting against the U.S. But neither the White House nor the Pentagon appears to be surprised by this. Hence we have the interesting spectacle of Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger referring to SDI as "the very core" of U.S. defense policy while maintaining sincerely that SDI is a research program meant only to answer an open question. This incongruence, along with the political posturing which invariably characterizes Congress's treatment of non-serious programs, accounts for the reception of SDI on Capitol Hill.

* A physician once thus answered a patient's question about how soon after his heart attack he could resume sexual activity: "When the desire overcomes the fear of death."

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A good illustration was the hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee on March 8, 1984. It began with a codeword-level review of Soviet developments in strategic defense, which the CIA's Lawrence Gershwin summed up in open session as: "The Soviets are ten years ahead of us in this field." Undersecretary Richard DeLauer and Robert Cooper then explained SDI as a $26-billion research program that would last until the early 90's, which might possibly be followed by a development program running into the late 90's, which, if successful, might yield initial, limited deployments around the year 2000.

Liberals and conservatives unanimously thought this silly. Perhaps, so reasoned the Senators who spoke up, there really is some protection to be gained, and the Soviets really are ten years ahead. In that case, the reasoning went, we should be building similar things quickly. As the program stands, ten years hence we will be twenty years behind. Perhaps, however, there really is not much protection to be gained, or any gain would be highly uncertain. If so, the Soviets are wasting their money on strategic defense, and are ten years ahead in a wild goose chase. In that case, why spend $26 billion on a lottery ticket that will yield only another lottery ticket?

At about the same time, Congressman Les Aspin (D-Wis), later chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, was telling a large private audience in Washington that, if the administration were to present a plan actually to build weapons to protect the American people, there would be a political realignment in the House and the plan would pass. He concluded, however, that so long as SDI remained an R & D program, Congress would not feel public pressure on its behalf and would continue to cut it.

Indeed, the fate of SDI in Congress is effectively decided by bargaining between people like Senator John Warner (R-Va) who, on the Pentagon's behalf, works to protect the future of current accounts, and ideological opponents like Senator Dale Bumpers (D-Ark). The administration for its part has opposed amendments to reserve any portion of the funds authorized for SDI actually to build defensive weapons. As a result, Congress's authorization for SDI for FY 86 is $2.7 billion. Note that the programs now labeled SDI, before they received SDI's alterations and labels, were scheduled to amount to a total of $2.8 billion in FY 86. Even by this measure, then, SDI is falling short.

In June 1985, Secretary Weinberger reportedly asked the SDI office to prepare for him an account —not a judgment, but an *account*—of what the U.S. could do immediately to destroy ballistic missiles if it were to build defensive systems based on technology currently available. This is precisely the right question to ask. It is the question to which the Defense Department should have addressed itself after the President's speech, if not before. In fact, it is the question with which Senator Wallop began in 1978. On the basis of the answers, politically responsible people can make politically responsible judgments about what is and what is not worth doing.

Yet on the many occasions where policymakers ask such questions the bureaucracy habitually loads the answers with assumptions that can be factored out only by a reading far more careful than any but the most dogged policymakers are likely to give to them. Nevertheless, as the 80's and the Reagan administration head toward their close, even people at the top are beginning to perceive how silly and how repetitive of past mistakes it is for the U.S. to confine SDI to research while knowing we have no alternative to strategic defense.

The education of high American officials in reality is occurring at the price of time—years whose fruit, once the enemy has picked it, no human power can restore. Yet the education is far from complete. The same President who speaks moving words about protecting the American people also speaks with obvious conviction about the need to "restore the integrity of the ABM treaty." Never mind that the essence of the ABM treaty is that the more vulnerable we are, the better off the world is. Never mind that no responsible official has ever proposed any means of *enforcing* an arms-control agreement with the Soviet Union, and that the Soviets have no reason whatever to heed the wishes of a nation that has allowed its agreements to be violated for a decade.

But suppose for a moment that one could, magically, "restore the integrity of the ABM treaty," which bars the protection of populations. Which of these two wholly contradictory approaches, self-protection or vulnerability, would the President urge the American people to embrace? It is difficult to believe that the President or his advisers have ever come to grips with the question.

In practice, their equivocation has proved once again that it is impossible for anyone, no matter how able, to embrace two contradictory propositions simultaneously without discrediting both. Moreover, even if one were abstractly to choose a pristine ABM treaty over defenses, how could one justify that choice in the light of the Soviet Union's growing ability to protect itself by counterforce strikes that are not restricted by any treaty and that continue to grow? The ABM treaty's very negotiators stated, also with apparent conviction, that the treaty would have to be renounced unless limitations were placed on offensive weapons to prevent the advent of counterforce missile arsenals. But such an arsenal is now with us—or, rather, with the Soviets. Every month in which American officials indulge in contradictions that they dare not resolve, every month in which they abdicate

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to technicians the responsibility for deciding when to build defenses, every month these technicians become, by default, policymakers, our predicament deepens.

Nor can America's political leaders rely on the U.S. intelligence community to tell them when the time is right to build defensive weapons. Intelligence has done its job—not as quickly or as neatly as it could have done, but well enough to notice the Soviet Union's counterforce arsenal, the Soviet Union's commitment to strategic defense, and the Soviet Union's production of several key components of such a defense. It is unreasonable to expect more than this.

Current technical intelligence systems were conceived primarily to monitor activities connected with long-range missile forces. Despite their many shortcomings, the systems did a passable job until the advent of mobile missiles. Unfortunately, most components of defensive systems are also readily mobile; moreover, they are built wholly under roofs.

Thus, while the term "deployment" was meaningful as a benchmark for Soviet capabilities and, to a lesser degree, intentions with regard to offensive missiles from 1959 to about 1982, applying that term to defensive forces fosters misunderstanding. U.S. intelligence analysts who look for evidence of Soviet defensive deployments as an index on the basis of which to warn policymakers look for the wrong thing, both because what they look for is hard to see, and because the concept is not very meaningful. "Production" is a much better criterion, but no serious student of U.S. capabilities would argue that our intelligence can be expected today to come up with meaningful figures on the production even of offensive weapons, let alone defensive ones—except by windfall.

As for the *quality* of defensive weapons, it is almost entirely beyond the ability of current technical intelligence to calibrate. Yet much of the argument within the U.S. government about whether the Soviets would be emboldened by their defensive weapons turns upon our judgment of those weapons' quality. Nor can we expect intelligence to tell us anything about how Soviet planners factor into their calculations any given level of defensive proficiency. Intelligence gives what it can.

Unlike intelligence analysts, however, policymakers receive the pay, perquisites, and deference of their offices precisely because they are expected to make up for uncertainty with judgment, and to do so in time.

In July 1985 Zbigniew Brzezinski, who had been President Carter's National Security Adviser, published an article in the *New Republic* arguing that our strategic predicament demands that we now build—not conduct research into, but build—strategic defenses at least capable of thwarting a Soviet counterforce strike. Clearly, it is impossible to consider the substance of our strategic predicament and arrive at any other conclusion.

The counsel of common sense has also come from a place we have been led not to expect it: Europe, for the sake of which, we often hear, we should limit SDI to research. Writing in the Winter 1986 issue of *Strategic Review*, Germany's Minister of Defense, Manfred Woerner, says that while SDI is all very well and his country looks forward to helping make decisions about the far-off future, many hundreds of Soviet ballistic missiles are aimed at his country now. These Soviet missiles are becoming more accurate and more usable. Hence his country needs and will develop antimissile forces.

As for our own security, Senator Pete Wilson (R-Cal) has correctly observed that it has already been jeopardized by over three years of inaction since the President's speech, while the Soviet threat has continued to grow. Worse, nothing now authorized by Congress, or even proposed by the administration, will keep the gap between Soviet and American strategic capabilities from widening. Nor will anything change until we resolve to do what we can, with what we have—*now*.

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The Arab World Discovers Anti-Semitism

Bernard Lewis

SINCE 1945, certain Arab countries have been the only places in the world where hard-core, Nazi-style anti-Semitism is publicly and officially endorsed and propagated.

In the Western world, since the defeat of the Nazi Reich, anti-Semitism, though by no means dead, is clandestine or hypocritical, and cannot be openly avowed by anyone with serious political ambitions or cultural pretensions. In the Soviet bloc, though extensive use is made of anti-Semitic themes and symbols in both domestic and foreign propaganda, anti-Semitism as such is denounced and condemned, and the war against the Jews is waged under other flags, such as secularist anti-Judaism and socialist anti-Zionism. While the influence of such anti-Semitic classics as Canon Rohling's *Talmud Jew* and the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* can sometimes be seen very clearly in polemical literature ostensibly directed against Jewish clericalism and Zionism, these works are not cited by name, and copies are apparently not available. In the Western world, where there is no comparable control of publications, these books are still being reprinted, but they are nowadays confined to the lunatic fringe, and their direct influence is minimal.

In the Arab world, by contrast, these two books are the most frequently cited authorities on Jewish matters—not only on Israel and Zionism, but on Jews and Judaism in general; not only in the context of the present time or since the beginning of Zionist settlement, but throughout the three thousand years of recorded Jewish history. Nor are these publications confined, as in the West, to the lunatic fringe. They are published by major, sometimes government, publishing houses; they are endorsed and sometimes introduced by prominent political, religious, and intellectual figures; they are quoted on national television and radio programs and in some of the most respected newspapers and magazines; they form the basis of discussions of Jews and Judaism in many school, college, and teacher-seminary textbooks.

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In 1970, in a book published by the PLO Research Center in Beirut, the writer, As'ad Razzuq, protested against the use of such tainted materials, which "are regarded with contempt by the civilized world," and which dishonor and discredit the Arab cause. At that time he listed twenty-six books based directly or indirectly on Rohling. His protest had no effect, and since then there have been many more such books. There are at least nine different Arabic translations of the *Protocols*, and innumerable editions, more than in any other language including German. One version, published in 1961, was introduced by the famous and respected author 'Abbas Mahmud al-'Aqqad; another, published in about 1968, was translated by the brother of President Nasser. Until a few years ago, the reader with access only to Arabic would not have known that the authenticity of the *Protocols* had ever been called into question, the sole discordant voice coming from some Marxist critics who reject personal explanations of history, such as those relied upon in the *Protocols*, but without indicating that they are a fabrication.

More recently, a few Arab writers have shown at least some awareness of this, but they still display a curious reluctance to abandon the *Protocols* entirely. One described them as "of questionable authenticity." An article in the Cairo newspaper *al-Ahram* (February 22, 1974) observes judiciously that "the prevailing opinion at the present time is that the *Protocols* are a forged document." This cautious formulation no doubt represents some progress, but leaves a number of questions unanswered, such as who forged them and what they represent. Here the article is remarkably equivocal, and the unwary reader might be left with the impression that if the *Protocols* were not actually fabricated by Jews, they nevertheless accurately reflect the image which the Zionists hold of themselves and which they desire to project to others. For the most part, however, their authenticity has been taken as axiomatic, and Arab writers on Jewish matters have sometimes assigned the *Protocols* the third place among the pillars of Judaism, after the Bible and the Talmud.

The *Protocols* have at different times been publicly recommended or cited by Presidents Nasser and Sadat of Egypt, President 'Arif of Iraq, King Faysal of Saudi Arabia, Colonel Qaddafi of Libya, and numerous other kings, presidents, prime min-

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isters, and political and intellectual leaders. In addition to local use and distribution, agencies in several Arab countries, and latterly also in revolutionary Iran, have undertaken the distribution of the *Protocols* and related literature all over the world, and notably in countries in Africa and in South and Southeast Asia not previously affected.

Clearly, the argument sometimes put forward that the Arabs cannot be anti-Semitic since they themselves are Semites lacks all merit, and indeed the mere use of this argument is in general an indication of either ignorance or bad faith. Semite, like Aryan, is a classification of language, not of race or nationality. The misuse of both these terms originated in the same quarters, and serves the same purpose. In any case, anti-Semitism has never been directed against any but Jews, and this has been well understood by all concerned. The Nazis, who may be recognized as the most authoritative exponents of anti-Semitism, saw no difficulty in simultaneously hating Jews and courting Arabs, and there were not a few Arabs who likewise found no difficulty in responding to that courtship. No people on earth is immune from the universal human disease of ethnic or racial hostility, and the Arabs are no exception.

The question should be put in a different form. Obviously, Arabs are as liable as Germans, Russians, Jews, or anyone else to develop hostilities against other peoples, and their history and literature bear ample testimony to this. But are Muslims subject to what has hitherto been regarded as a specifically and indeed exclusively Christian disease—a certain attitude to Jews arising from the gospel narratives of the foundation of the Christian faith, and inculcated in countless generations of children through education, worship, literature, art, and even music? According to the Qur'an, Jesus was a prophet and not the son of God, and the crucifixion never took place. The prophet Jesus was taken away by God to safety, and a simulacrum or illusion crucified in his place. There is therefore in Muslim theology and literature no accusation of deicide, and consequently no doctrine of collective and hereditary guilt for that crime; nor is there any such intimate relationship with the earlier religion as to make continued Jewish existence a challenge to Muslim verities.

In considering these questions, it may be useful to distinguish three types of hostility which, though they may sometimes overlap and interact, are nevertheless different.

The first of these may be defined as opposition to Israel, and also to the Zionist movement from which Israel developed. Zionism is an ideology, which men of good faith and good will may accept or reject, without being necessarily inspired by prejudice. Israel is a state, engaged in a political conflict, over real not imaginary issues, with other states and peoples. Such a conflict may generate prejudice; it may be affected by prejudice; but the hostility to which it gives rise is not necessarily, in itself, an indication of prejudice. This point is particularly important in a region where violent language is normal and accepted in the expression of political conflicts or even disagreements.

A second type of hostility, more difficult to define, is what one might call common, conventional, in a sense even "normal" prejudice, sometimes giving rise to "normal" or "conventional" persecution. Hostility to neighbors of another family, another tribe, race, faith, or origin is part of the universal condition of mankind. Relations are always troublesome between majorities and minorities, between neighboring states and peoples, between rulers and ruled. There is no lack of examples in other parts of the world of minority groups, sometimes from a different religion, race, or culture, who play some specific economic role, and are hated and persecuted as a result. The fate of Indians in East Africa and Chinese in Southeast Asia are examples. Hostility to Jews may sometimes be caused, or at least aggravated, by similar causes.

The third type is anti-Semitism—a hatred which is unique in its persistence, its universality, its profundity, and above all its theological and psychological origins. Unlike other forms of ethnic and racial prejudice, anti-Semitism goes beyond mere denigration or even persecution, and attributes to its adversary a quality of cosmic and eternal evil. Conventional prejudice and persecution can be very terrible, but they differ from anti-Semitism as does conventional from nuclear war.

In what follows, the term anti-Semitism will be limited to the third category defined above—that special and peculiar hatred of Jews, which has its origins in the role assigned to Jews in certain Christian writings and beliefs concerning the genesis of their faith, and which has found modern expression in such works as the *Protocols* and similar portrayals of a universal Jewish plot against both God and mankind.

In this specialized sense, anti-Semitism did not exist in the traditional Islamic world. True, Muslim religious and other literature provide ample evidence of prejudice against Jews, and Muslim history records not a few cases of persecution. But—and this is surely the crucial point—these attitudes and these persecutions were not accompanied by the demonological beliefs and conspiratorial fantasies that are characteristic of Christian anti-Semitism in both medieval and modern Europe, and do not differ significantly from the hostility and persecution to which other religious minorities, besides the Jews, have been from time to time subject.

While in Christendom the Jews were the only non-Christian minority, in the Islamic world they were one among several, and in most places not the most important. It is true that the Qur'an and other early Muslim writings express a preference for Christians over Jews. For while the Prophet

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had few encounters with Christians, he came into conflict with the Jewish tribes of Medina, and this conflict, with the bitterness which it engendered, is reflected in the Qur'an and in the biographical traditions. But the conflict ended in their destruction, not his; and this made it possible for Muslims to adopt a more relaxed and less embittered attitude toward their Jewish subjects.

If the Qur'an and early traditions show far greater hostility to Jews than to Christians, the Muslim law makes no such distinction, but treats both subject religions on a footing of equality with each other. In practice, in medieval and in Ottoman times, Jews often fared rather better than Christians, for the obvious reason that unlike their Christian compatriots, they were not suspected of treasonable sympathies with the Christian enemies of the Islamic empires.

The Islamic society and polity have now existed for more than fourteen centuries, in vast areas of Asia, Africa, and, for long periods, southwestern and then southeastern Europe. Clearly, the treatment of Jews, and the attitude toward them of governments and majorities, varied greatly from time to time and from place to place, in accordance with both internal and external circumstances. While, therefore, it is difficult to generalize, this much may be said with reasonable certainty—that they were never free from discrimination, but only occasionally subject to persecution; that their situation was never as bad as in Christendom at its worst, nor ever as good as in Christendom at its best. There is nothing in Islamic history to parallel the Spanish expulsion and Inquisition or the Russian pogroms, let alone the Nazi Holocaust; there is also nothing to compare with the progressive emancipation and acceptance accorded to Jews in the democratic countries of the Christian and post-Christian West during the last three centuries. While prejudice was always present in Islamic lands, it was often muted, rarely violent, and mostly inspired by disdain and contempt rather than by the explosive mixture of hate, fear, and envy that fueled the anti-Semitism of Christendom.

THE 19th and 20th centuries, however, brought major changes, mostly to the detriment of Jews and also of other non-Muslim minorities and sometimes even of Muslim ethnic minorities. Three factors in particular contributed to the beginning and development of European-style anti-Semitism in the Islamic world. The first of these was the rise to world domination of the European empires, and the consequent enhancement of the influence of the local Christian subject populations within the Islamic states. Much attention has been given by scholars to the transfer and acceptance in the Islamic world of such European notions as liberalism, constitutionalism, and later socialism. But there were other ideas that traveled by the same route, among them anti-Semitism.

Thus it was from their Christian subjects that the Ottomans first heard about the blood libel, previously unknown to Muslim literature and history. European consular and clerical missions, and their local protégés and disciples, played some part in the introduction and propagation of these ideas. The years of the Dreyfus crisis, for example, saw the appearance of the first specifically anti-Semitic books published in Arabic: these were translations of anti-Semitic writings produced in France.

The impact of these books was very limited, however. The translations were made by Christian Arabs, and were printed in very small editions. They had only a small effect within the Christian communities, and virtually none outside. And even within the eastern Christian communities, they were resisted by leading Christian Arab writers, who condemned the introduction of this kind of hate literature.

The promotion of anti-Jewish ideologies among the Arabs by Europeans did not end with the Dreyfus affair, though, apart from the activities of a few cranky individuals, Western countries were no longer involved, at least not until the advent of the Nazis. In the period immediately following World War I, the campaign of anti-Semitism launched by the White Russians produced some repercussions in the Middle East, if of limited extent. But then came Nazi Germany, which from 1933 to 1945 devoted considerable efforts to wooing Arab opinion. These efforts were very successful at the political and strategic levels—in mobilizing Arab support against the common enemies, the Western democracies and the Jews, and in propagating Nazi philosophy about the nation, the party, and the state. They were less successful in promoting Nazi anti-Semitism among the Arabs, who with a few exceptions continued to express their hostility to Jews in traditional religious and modern political, rather than anti-Semitic, ways. Nazi influence in the Arab world did not end with the collapse of the Third Reich, but was continued by Nazi émigrés, many of whom found a refuge and new tasks in Nasser's Egypt and elsewhere.

With the rapid rise of Soviet influence in the Arab countries from the mid-50's, this phase came to an end, and anti-Jewish polemics in the Arabic media acquired a new ideological underpinning and a new vocabulary. One of the stock accusations against the Jew in the Nazi era was that he was a Bolshevik and a revolutionary, and responsible for the destruction of Russia by the Soviets. This was of course an unsuitable idea for Soviet Russia to spread among its new allies and protégés. These charges were therefore dropped, except in a few places like Saudi Arabia, where they survive to the present day. Elsewhere, such words as socialist, revolution, and even Bolshevik became terms of praise instead of blame, and therefore not appropriate for denouncing Jews.

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In a grotesque twist, this accusation was replaced by a new one—that Jews were racist, and Zionism a form of Nazism.

These charges, previously unknown among the Arabs, spread very rapidly, and their appearance was recognized as a sign of Soviet influence. The campaign at the United Nations to denounce Zionism as racism, culminating in the famous resolution of 1975, was clearly a Soviet far more than an Arab enterprise, and was needed for Soviet domestic as well as international purposes.* Since then, readers and viewers all over the world have been treated to the strange spectacle of some of Hitler's former allies denouncing Hitler's foremost victims as racists and Nazis.

THE second factor which worsened the position of virtually all religious and ethnic minorities under Islam was the breakdown and ultimate collapse of the old political structures and of the loyalties and traditions associated with them. Tolerance comes more easily from a position of strength. It is far more difficult when one is defeated, conquered, and subjugated, and when one's own tolerated subjects seem to be in alliance with the conquering enemy. The old dynastic and communal system had worked fairly well. The new patriotic and nationalist loyalties and structures which replaced it, despite their proclaimed adoption first of libertarian and later of egalitarian doctrines, were far less able to tolerate any kind of diversity, and far harsher therefore in their treatment of religious, ethnic, and ideological minorities. For a while, the resulting hostility was directed more against Christians than against Jews. But the Jews were fewer, weaker, and far less able to call on the protection of the great powers. They therefore presented a more tempting target.

It is possible that these two developments would in themselves have sufficed to make the position of the ancient Jewish communities in the Arab lands untenable. They were finally and unequivocally doomed by the third factor, the struggle resulting from the growth of the Jewish resettlement in Palestine, the establishment of the state of Israel, and the series of Arab-Israeli wars that followed.

In the early years of the present century there was a movement of liberal patriotism among the urban elite of the Ottoman empire, in which Muslims, Christians of various denominations and nationalities, and Jews cooperated in a joint struggle to realize shared political objectives. This continued briefly even after the defeat and destruction of the Ottoman empire, and in the early post-World War I years a few Jews played some role in Arab political activities. This was not, however, of long duration. The new nationalism, which doomed some minorities and endangered all of them, soon affected the Jews as well. The struggle in Palestine removed whatever slender chances there might have been for a recovery. Almost from the beginning of the Palestine Mandate, anti-Jewish feeling grew stronger and stronger, not only in Palestine but, one after another, in most other Arab countries.

From the first, anti-Semitism played some part in this. Thus, for example, a memorandum presented by a group of Arab notables to the British Colonial Secretary in 1921 quotes extensively from the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. But this kind of anti-Semitic literature remained a minor element in the Arab propaganda against the Jews, most of which rested on the revival and development of the themes and symbols of traditional Islamic anti-Judaism, and continued to do so, with few exceptions, right through the 1920's and indeed until the 1950's. True, there was some slight increase in the anti-Semitic literature available in Arabic. The *Protocols* were translated several times, as were some other anti-Semitic classics, and some of the books translated at the time of the Dreyfus affair were reprinted in new and larger editions. But this literature was marginal to the main Arab struggle.

It is noteworthy that through the most difficult times in Mandatory Palestine, and even during the period of German connections and powerful Nazi influence, the specifically anti-Semitic element remained minor. While, as we have seen, Nazi political philosophy exercised some influence, and the Nazi war against the Jews won enthusiastic support, there were few, apart from such as the Mufti of Jerusalem and his circle, who espoused the Nazi doctrine of anti-Semitism, and relatively few anti-Semitic works were available in Arabic. Hatred was deep and violent, and expressed in the strongest language, but it was still in the main traditional rather than anti-Semitic in its themes. Even the wars of 1948-49, the establishment of Israel, and the departure of the Palestinian refugees, while they engendered powerful and intense feelings, do not seem to have contributed significantly to the output of published anti-Semitism.

The real change began after the Sinai War of 1956 and was accelerated after the Six-Day War of 1967. During these years, first a trickle and then a torrent of anti-Semitic books, articles, films, radio and television programs, newspaper and magazine pieces, saturated the media in the Arab countries of the Middle East and, to a much lesser exent, affected North Africa. The favorite works were Rohling's *Talmud Jew* and the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, which appeared in literally dozens of translations and adaptations, and rapidly came to dominate virtually all discussion of the Jews and Judaism, in the media and in academic circles. In addition to these two, numerous other anti-Semitic classics from continental Europe were translated and adapted, as well as some of the more recent writings of French, British, and North

* See my article, "The Anti-Zionist Resolution," *Foreign Affairs*, October 1976.

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American fascists. Along with the themes and imagery, the Arabic media also adopted the iconography of European anti-Semitism (though it is interesting that in this respect cartoonists seem to follow East European rather than Central or West European models).

So far there has been very little attempt to resist this universal spread and adoption of anti-Semitism, and very little attempt even to provide an alternative source of information for the young Arab reader who may wish to learn something about this peculiar people, the Jews. No doubt, the Arab intelligentsia has its own equivalents of Émile Zola, who would wish to protest against this pollution of the intellectual waters, and, as already noted, there were indeed such in earlier and freer times. But the present political and intellectual atmosphere in the Arab and Islamic world, including the émigré communities, is not conducive to dissent.

Aside from themes borrowed and adapted from Christendom, there are now anti-Semitic innovations that are explicitly Islamic, or at least presented in Islamic terms. The most important of these is the restatement of the story of Muhammad's relations with the Jews. Instead of being a minor nuisance, ineffectual and unsuccessful in their plots against him, Jews are now presented in a role which obviously reflects the narrative of the Christian gospels. They are depicted as a dark and evil force, conspiring to destroy the Prophet, and continuing as the main danger to Islam from that time to this. Given the importance of the biography of the Prophet in Muslim education, the adoption of this theme is by far the most potent instrument for the dissemination of anti-Semitism among the mass of the Muslim population.

An obvious question arises: how is it that while the Arabs did not to any extent adopt European-style anti-Semitism during the struggle in Palestine, the 1936 rebellion led by the Mufti, the alliance with the Nazis, the rise of Israel, and the departure of the Palestinians, they suddenly began to do so in the late 50's, 60's, and 70's? An answer may be found in the wars of 1956 and 1967.

The war of 1948-49 was a hard-fought struggle, which lasted many weeks, and in which Israel won the prize of survival at a high cost. By contrast, the Israeli victories of 1956 and 1967 were swift and overwhelming, and for the vanquished presented a terrible problem of explanation. This problem was made more difficult by the general description, in the Arabic media, of Israelis and Jews in general as cowardly and lacking in all the martial virtues. An article in the Egyptian armed forces weekly of November 16, 1964 remarks: "The Jew in his very soul and character has not the qualities of a man who bears arms. He is not naturally prepared to sacrifice for anything, not even for his son or his wife. . . ." An Egyptian literary critic, commenting on the cliché-ridden portrayal of Israelis in fiction and drama, asked: "Before this kind of presentation, I put the question: if the Israelis were really like that, how could they have inflicted a defeat upon us?"

How, indeed? If the Israelis are as corrupt and cowardly as their image in Arabic literature, then their humiliating victories become even more inexplicable, or at least require explanations beyond the normal processes of rational thought. To a rapidly increasing extent, the literature of anti-Semitism has provided such an explanation.

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Montezuma's Literary Revenge

Fernanda Eberstadt

AN INTENT observer approaching the fiction, essays, paintings, and sculpture of 20th-century Mexico will be impressed by one outstanding feature these works of art share. Whether one speaks of the novels of Mariano Azuela, the murals of Diego Rivera, or the essays of Octavio Paz, their subject matter is always Mexico, obsessively, unrelievedly Mexico, and in particular the Mexican Revolution of 1910-20. Indeed, one is hard-pressed to think of another country whose artistic and intellectual elite have, of their own volition, so exclusively preoccupied themselves with the task of defining the national character. The poet and essayist Alfonso Reyes most succinctly and urgently summed up this mission when he wrote that every Mexican artist had as his highest duty the obligation "to seek the soul of the nation." So catching is this national self-obsession that even some of the minor geniuses of the English-speaking world have been coopted into the enterprise of explaining what it is to be Mexican, as in such overbrilliant works as Malcolm Lowry's *Under the Volcano* and D.H. Lawrence's *The Plumed Serpent*.

Of those native artists born after the Revolution, few have addressed themselves more consistently to these subjects, or anatomized the Mexican character more enthusiastically, than the world-famous novelist Carlos Fuentes, whose latest work of fiction, *The Old Gringo*,* was published in the United States last year. Perhaps more than any other contemporary Mexican writer, Fuentes has self-consciously undertaken that search into the soul of the nation that Alfonso Reyes commissioned—a search heightened and given poignance by the fact that, like many Latin American intellectuals, Fuentes has spent much, if not most, of his life abroad. Born in 1928 in Panama City, the son of a Mexican diplomat, Fuentes grew up in Chile, Argentina, and Washington, D.C. He was educated at the University of Mexico and the Institut des Hautes-Études in Geneva, and has spent a great many years in Europe and the United States; he now teaches comparative literature at Harvard.

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Fuentes has had an abundantly prolific literary career. He is the author of some fourteen or fifteen novels, ranging in genre from "magic realism" to the spy thriller; of countless political broadsides, works of cultural criticism, plays, short stories, and even films, including a Western co-authored with Gabriel García Márquez (*Time to Die*, 1966). Like other Latin American intellectuals, Fuentes has combined a literary vocation with government service, diplomatic duty, and political activism. Over the years he has served as delegate to the Geneva-based International Labor Organization, as chief of the Department of Cultural Relations of Mexico's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and as ambassador to France (1975-77). He has been, as well, an almost permanent fixture at international conferences on the Third World, of the kind devoted to berating the United States and simultaneously demanding an unconditional surrender of its wealth.

FUENTES's first two novels, *Where the Air Is Clear* (1958) and *The Good Conscience* (1959), together form a crossroads, each marking his indebtedness to a different literary tradition. Though published later, *The Good Conscience* is clearly the author's first novel. It is set in the heavy, almost dyspeptically ornate colonial silver-mine town of Guanajuato, and tells of a family of Spanish merchants who came to Mexico in the 19th century to make good. Written in a deliberately archaic, period-piece manner, the novel opens with a leisurely history of the Ceballos family, nicely entwined with the history of their provincial capital as it is buffeted and scourged by Mexico's bloody uprisings and its unhappy brushes with empire.

The Good Conscience, however, is not the novel it starts out to be. From a tale of the provincial grand bourgeoisie, a class and generation which the historian Frank Tannenbaum has described as "locally bred colonists who for all purposes felt themselves to be living in a foreign country," *The Good Conscience* abruptly changes course when it reaches the 20th century and becomes instead a steamy coming-of-age story, charting the autoero-

* Translated by Margaret Sayers Peden, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 199 pp., $14.95.

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tic and religious fervors of its hero, Jaime Ceballos. Now we are in a world of adolescent alienation and rebellion, as Jaime bucks his family's conformism by sheltering a union organizer on the lam, befriending an Indian scholarship student who dreams of class warfare, working on the railroad (where he encounters his estranged mother operating as an alcoholic evangelist-hooker, but is too prissy to approach her), flagellating himself in the desert, and masturbating in church before the image of Christ.

The novel concludes with a discomfitingly abrupt reversal. On being told by the parish priest that his religious and (implicitly) political yearnings are not true imitations of Christ but rather manifestations of an overweening pride, Jaime embraces conformism with a vengeance, kissing off his Indian friend and cynically embarking on the moneygrubbing legal career for which his family has prepared him. In later Fuentes novels, Jaime Ceballos will reappear as a Mexico City sophisticate, a faceless figure at high-society soirées.

For all its headlong shiftings of gear, for all the glib cynicism of its denunciation of bourgeois values, and for all its crude lashings of self-pity, *The Good Conscience* is quite a gripping and colorful book. Anyone reading this youthful novel will feel himself in the hands of a confident and powerful if somewhat sensational writer, one gifted with abundant natural talents and not too much brain. The book is interesting, too, in that it suggests a course Fuentes's work might have taken: of fast-paced adventure writing in the 19th-century manner with a strong undercurrent of social criticism. Instead, as we shall see, Fuentes's desire to be not just a novelist but an intellectual heavyweight led him to work in fancy literary forms which make mincemeat out of his native gifts.

If *The Good Conscience* is a truncated revamping of the French tale of the provinces, *Where the Air Is Clear* (a book which enjoyed enormous acclaim both in Latin America and in Europe) could be described as a flawed gem of high modernism. On the level of manifest content, *Where the Air Is Clear* sets out to portray post-revolutionary Mexican society in its full array of luxury, tyranny, and wretched inequality, and to herald its imminent collapse. On another level—for *Where the Air Is Clear* is also an unrelentingly mystical piece of work—the novel depicts the survival, beneath Mexico's overlay of internationalism and modernity, of its secret pagan gods with their insatiable demands for bloodshed and betrayal.

The "hero" of this novel, in unabashed homage to James Joyce's personification of Dublin in *Ulysses*, is Mexico City itself; the title refers, sardonically, to the capital's perennial smog. Fuentes was writing in the mid-50's when Mexico City was fast being transformed from a gauche, elegant town of colonial palaces and colonial gossip to what it is today: a vast, seamy, teeming metropolis of turquoise-colored cement hovels with corrugated tin roofs, guard dogs, a sinking cathedral, hub-cap stalls, murder, artificial flowers, saints, and Indian migrants. Fuentes, in the person of Ixta Cienfuegos, a mysterious stranger who is simultaneously man-about-town and the reincarnation of the Aztec god of war, takes us through many layers of Mexico City by eliciting confessions from bankers, cabdrivers, cooks, kept girls, beggars, revolutionary heroes, accountants' wives, and dispossessed aristocrats.

Of these, by far the most compelling is the life story of Federico Robles, a ruthless and sentimental tycoon whose rise and fall form a cautionary symbolic tale of modern Mexico. Born on a dirt floor, the son of an Indian peasant whose wife was raped by the local landowner, Robles becomes, successively, a protégé of the local priest; a cavalry officer under the governor-turned-revolutionary-leader Venustiano Carranza, fighting first the dictator Victoriano Huerta (who in 1913 had wrested the presidency of Mexico from the freely-elected Francisco Madero) and then the brigand Pancho Villa; a provincial lawyer holding much credit with the new government; and, finally, one of the richest and most powerful men in Mexico. In the novel's obligatory reversal of fortune, Robles's financial empire collapses because of unsound speculations, his brittle wife dies in a fire, he marries his blind mistress, and, absolved of the sin of capitalism, becomes a humble cotton farmer up north.

Where the Air Is Clear is full of pungent evocations of the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and textures of the city, exciting action, and freshly captured battle scenes (including a splendid rendition of the Battle of Celaya in April 1915, when Carranza's forces decisively vanquished Pancho Villa's rebel army). But the novel is marred by authorial self-indulgence and pretentiousness. Fuentes here mimics the more exaggerated mannerisms of the modernist style, transposing to a Mexican setting that stylized clatter of sounds and traditions which one critic has aptly described as the juxtaposition of Bartók with bar-talk. Much of *Where the Air Is Clear* is a highly self-conscious mélange of advertising slogans, refrains from popular songs, and overheard fragments of cocktail-party chitchat. The pastiche is made more local but no more palatable by being interspersed with lyrical streams of consciousness about Aztec sacrifice, plumed serpents, and darkness—incantations which run on for ten pages at a clip without hope of a comma, let alone a full stop. That, despite these efforts to smother it in affectation, *Where the Air Is Clear* remains an energetic and engrossing book is a tribute to Fuentes's gifts as a storyteller.

THOSE gifts are most effectively displayed in *The Death of Artemio Cruz* (1962), a slighter but stronger brother to *Where the Air Is Clear*, being the story of a powerful financier's deathbed journey into his own past.

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Cruz is a man who was made by the Revolution and whose cynical cooptation of its ideals makes him in turn symbolic of the failures of modern Mexico. As a character he is also the most developed and the most stylized example of a type that recurs in Fuentes's fiction.

The resentful, barefoot bastard of a Veracruz landowner and a mulatto servant girl, the youthful Cruz runs away to join the Revolution after he accidentally murders his uncle. We follow his rise in the ranks of Venustiano Carranza's army by means of disguised acts of cowardice; his crazy, unmanning love for a young camp follower who is strung up by Huerta's Federalists; his capture by Pancho Villa's army, notorious for its slaughter of prisoners and of innocents; and his escape from death when he betrays to his captors his own army's whereabouts. After the Revolution, Cruz marries the aristocratic Catalina Bernal and takes over her father's heavily mortgaged estate. At the time of his deathbed reminiscences, in 1959, Artemio Cruz's Mexican empire encompasses chains of newspapers and hotels, mines, timber concessions, pipe foundries, and (in a piece of characteristic Fuentes symbolism) the fish business. More importantly for Fuentes's purposes, Cruz is a front man for numerous American corporations seeking to evade Mexican restrictions on foreign holdings.

Artemio Cruz is elaborately constructed (thanks, this time, to the influence of the French *nouveau roman*) in three separate persons and tenses. The first-person present catalogues Cruz's silent sickroom excoriations of his spineless family ("Do you think I will let my fortune pass into the hands of hypocrites like you three, three blind bats who don't even know how to fly?"); the rather strained second-person future, likewise in interior monologue, traces Cruz's physiological functionings and malfunctionings ("You will try to imagine . . . the serous membrane that will line your abdominal cavity and enfold your intestine. . . ."); the mercifully conventional third-person past retails Cruz's historical recollections. These last, constituting the most interesting portions of the book, move backward in time to 1903, when we are introduced to Cruz's natural grandmother, a lunatic harridan living in an abandoned Veracruz hacienda, who herself recollects the palmy days when she and her husband, a military man, had "glittered in the makebelieve court of His Most Serene Highness, General Santa Anna" (deposed by the Liberals in 1855). In this way is the history of the republic comprehended within the clotted brain of a rich mulatto bastard on his deathbed.

For Fuentes's final verdict on men like Artemio Cruz, and on the republic they helped to found, we turn to the end of the novel:

> You will bequeath this country: your newspaper, the hints and adulation, the conscience drugged by lying articles written by men of no ability; . . . You will bequeath them their crooked labor leaders and captive unions, their new landlords, their American investments, their jailed workers, their monopolies and their great press, their wet-backs, hoods, secret agents, their foreign deposits, their bullied agitators, servile deputies, fawning ministers, elegant tract homes, . . . their fleas and wormy tortillas, their illiterate Indians, unemployed laborers, rapacious pawnshops, fat men armed with aqualungs and stock portfolios, thin men armed with their fingernails: they have their Mexico, they have their inheritance. . . .

According to Fuentes, the failure of Mexico to translate the Revolution's original idealism into an honest, just, and equitable polity is to be blamed on this new class of military-men-turned-tycoons-and-politicians who have shielded themselves "behind glory to justify rapine in the name of the Revolution, self-aggrandizement in the name of working for the good of the Revolution," and who have perpetuated ancient cycles of exploitation and inequalities of wealth by selling out to North American imperialism. (That the Revolution might have been a corrupt or self-serving proposition from the start is a prospect he does not entertain.) Yet it must also be said that for the early Fuentes, these men also retain something irresistibly heroic about them. Complex, witty, divided, Artemio Cruz and Federico Robles possess a depth of feeling that outmatches everyone around them, including the insipid counter-heroes whom Fuentes introduces to remind us of the unmet spiritual needs of the masses. Cruz in particular is a most memorable character, a confirmed sybarite with a tart and crabby tongue, a businessman's instinctive understanding of human frailty, and a ravenous sensitivity to physical things—a man who can exploit the occasion of his death to summon up a heady procession of oysters, walnut tables, fresh quinces, salt marshes, crumbling leather, burning leaves, white marble, autumn forests, the wet earth, Belgian tapestries.

The Death of Artemio Cruz is in many ways Fuentes's best work, and certainly his most disciplined and concentrated, notable for the richness of its prose and the subtlety of its insights into human relations, especially in their more devious modes. Yet it too suffers, like its predecessors, from its self-imposed formal constraints. Fuentes's mannered veerings from first person to second to third, his tricky allusiveness and ellipses, his unpunctuated prose poems (which sometimes seem to mimic a crafty old bully's determination to be boring on purpose) all serve to wreak in the name of art an unnecessary and finally debilitating havoc. That all this fragmentariness is intended to duplicate the movements of human consciousness itself is no consolation to the reader who comes to literature to see how true artists overcome fragmentation by a unifying effort of the imagination.

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In the two decades following the publication of *The Death of Artemio Cruz*, Fuentes embarked on a succession of experiments with different voguish literary forms. In novellas like *Aura* (1962) and *Birthday* (1969), he adopted the southern offshoot of surrealism known as "magic realism" which was brought to perfection by Gabriel García Márquez in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and by Julio Cortázar in *Hopscotch*.

More monumental have been Fuentes's experiments in that French school which teaches that the text is the reader's, not the writer's, to construct—a theory which in Fuentes's case produced such fecund miracles of self-indulgence as *A Change of Skin* (1967) and *Terra Nostra* (1975). The former, which opens with a dedication to Cortázar and an acknowledgement to the "Ministry of Foreign Relations of the Socialist Republic of Czechoslovakia," is ostensibly a novel about two couples who swap wives on a trip to the Mexican seaside. The fact that one gentleman is a former Nazi and one lady is Jewish, however, provides the occasion for an obscene and surrealistic encapsulation of Western civilization, much of it in the second-person singular, little of it punctuated, which rambles from the persecution of medieval European Jewry to the Holocaust, stopping along the way for such "parallel" holocausts as those visited by the Spanish on the Indians in the New World and the Americans on the Japanese at Hiroshima. These shards of pop history are washed down with great dollops of Beatles lyrics, advertising slogans, celebrations of 60's youth, and fragments of Aztec mythology.

The 60's and 70's were also the period of Fuentes's most sustained political activity, when he became both a much sought-after speaker on American campuses and virtually a fixed constellation at such gatherings as the Congress for Solidarity with Cuba, the North-South Conference on International Economic Development, and the Belgrade-based Conference of Nonaligned Nations. Today he is accorded considerable prominence in the American press as an authority on geopolitical and economic trends; his policy recommendations on such matters as the debt crisis or the Contadora process appear with some regularity on the op-ed pages of the New York *Times*, the Washington *Post*, and the Los Angeles *Times*.

Fuentes, in short, is a writer for whom art and politics are inseparable, and one whose *succès d'estime* is attributable in part to the stances he has taken. It would therefore be doing him less than justice to leave unexamined the political vision which informs his fiction and essays and which has commandeered so generous a portion of his career.

Fuentes's world outlook can be readily extrapolated from his views on Mexico. Taking into account the shifts and modifications of this outlook over the years, it can best be described as left-wing utopian with an overlay of sentimental anarchism. Primarily, his role in this hemisphere has been as a cultivated and (all things considered) rather patrician denouncer of American imperialism, colonialism, and big business. In addition to his role as nay-sayer to imperialist exploitation, Fuentes has served as a devout and ardent defender of revolution, making no distinction (at least for polemical purposes) in either aims or results between the American Revolution of 1776 and the Cuban Revolution of 1959—or, for that matter, the Paris student riots of May 1968, on which he published a slim volume, accompanied by photographs, declaring that "This revolution is ours, too."

Fuentes's habit of blurring distinctions is abetted by another habit, which is to deny the role that ideology plays in revolution. For example, he insists that Marxism-Leninism is simply a "label" for Latin American revolutionaries like the Sandinistas and the Salvadoran FMLN, a label covering the sorts of services formerly provided in the region by the Roman Catholic Church. That the Soviet Union might be involved in affixing this particular label is regarded by Fuentes as a canard, or a pretext for an American invasion.

In Fuentes's mind, it comes as no surprise to learn, the Soviet Union and the United States are "spectral siblings." The one has its Brezhnev Doctrine, the other its Monroe Doctrine; the one has Eastern Europe, the other its "Caribbean Warsaw Pact"; the one invaded Afghanistan, the other Grenada. The only difference is that while Russia is a stagnant gerontocracy unable and unwilling to lift a finger in the international arena, the United States is an active global slave-master.

A staunch friend to the Sandinistas—he has assentingly quoted one *comandante*'s definition of that dictatorship as "Nicaraguan capitalism with a human face"—Fuentes has defended their military build-up and justified their revocation of civil rights. His admiration for the Sandinistas' political experiment extends to their artistic achievements as well. Indeed, nowhere is Fuentes's fusion of art and politics more apparent, or finally more compromising, than in his introduction to *Fire from the Mountain*, the guerrilla memoirs of Omar Cabezas, currently chief of the Nicaraguan Office of National Security. Fuentes compares Cabezas's diary to the work of Proust, Stendhal, Cervantes, Defoe, Balzac, Dostoevsky, and Kafka. "Throw in a few drops of existential anguish, two drops of Augustinian faith and Thomist teleology, a measure of Marxist analysis, and a full ounce of . . . Sandinist brio," writes Fuentes, and you have a masterpiece conceived in language as "fresh, funny, direct, and irreverent as any produced by Latin American literature in its history."

Poor Latin America, poor literature. As Xavier Arguello has written (in the *New Republic*), "*Fire from the Mountain* is primarily not a literary work or an adventure story at all. It is, rather, a

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political instrument . . . placed at the service of a cause." Fuentes's own novels, as we have seen, deliberately break down distinctions among disparate levels and categories of expression; one would never have thought a professor of comparative literature at Harvard capable of ignoring the difference between government propaganda, even when it takes the form of a compelling document like Cabezas's diary, and *Remembrance of Things Past*.

THE toll all this attitudinizing has taken on Fuentes's talents is painfully evident in his most recent novel, *The Old Gringo*, in which relations between the United States and Latin America, long an implicit theme of his fiction, become the main event.

The Old Gringo's point of departure is the disappearance into revolutionary Mexico of the American satirist, journalist, and short-story writer, Ambrose Bierce. The action unfolds in 1914 at a Chihuahuan hacienda occupied by Pancho Villa's rebel army, which is gathering strength for its march south to occupy Mexico City.

A brief and sparsely written novel, *The Old Gringo* describes the triangle formed among Ambrose Bierce—a lean, bitter, quixotic old man who, we are told repeatedly, has "come to Mexico to die"; Tomas Arroyo, a young general in Villa's army, out to avenge centuries of exploitation and oppression; and Miss Harriet Winslow, a headstrong young schoolmarm from Washington, D.C. who has been hired as a governess by the now-fled owners of the hacienda and whose determination to give her money's worth obliges her to stay on to teach Villa's Indian followers how to read and write.

For a Fuentes novel, the action is both fairly listless and elliptical. Much of it occurs offstage or in dreams while other characters sit in Arroyo's luxurious Pullman car, delivering soliloquies about Mexican destiny and North American wickedness. As in one of those reverse Westerns that are low on action and high on moralizing about the just grievances of the red man, *The Old Gringo* falls into the stock division of good guys vs. bad guys. "Haven't you ever thought, you gringos, that all this land was once ours? Ah, our resentments and our memories go hand in hand," sighs one *comandante*, gazing north at El Paso.

Pop psychologizing takes the place of character delineation in this novel, in which each protagonist is merely a type standing in for a particular political or cultural viewpoint. Arroyo, a stud whose private parts are described often and in lingering detail, is a spokesman for the Revolution's new order; Harriet, rather a figure of fun, develops from a knee-jerk American patriot with a missionary zeal into a confused and guilty liberal who denounces U.S. policy in Cuba and Mexico—"the backyards of my country, occupied by my country because our destiny is to be strong with the weak"; Bierce, who most speaks for the author, is a rebel and cynic, embittered by North American crookedness, hypocrisy, and ignorance and yearning after the dark, primitive soul of the Mexican Revolution. "Open your eyes, Miss Harriet, and remember how we have killed our Redskins and never had the courage to fornicate with the squaws and at least create a half-breed nation. We are caught in the business of forever killing people whose skin is of a different color. Mexico is the proof of what we could have been, so keep your eyes wide open."

The Old Gringo is almost deliberately indifferent to preserving historical propriety or avoiding anachronisms. Fuentes collapses chronology, misrepresents Ambrose Bierce's personal life, and confuses much of his career. The novel's historical liberties are most egregiously apparent when it comes to the sexual front—for although all Fuentes's books are dirty, *The Old Gringo* is the most implausibly so. Are we really to believe that the old-fashioned and gallant Ambrose Bierce would, in 1914, find himself unable to open his mouth to Miss Winslow without uttering obscenities, or that the genteel and inexperienced Miss Winslow would describe her hometown of Washington as a "city moist as the crotch of an aroused Negress"?

But Fuentes has played fast and loose with historical context for a reason. *The Old Gringo* is not really a novel about 1914, about Mexico, or even about Ambrose Bierce, but a weak and thinly disguised allegory of contemporary United States policy toward Central America, with Pancho Villa's charismatic rebellion a stand-in for the Nicaragua of men like Omar Cabezas, and Miss Winslow a little drummer girl in search of good sex and a revolutionary cause. "Ask yourself how many like me have taken up arms to support the Revolution," says a middle-class colonel in Villa's army. "We can govern ourselves, I assure you, *senorita*. . . . You don't think we're capable, then? Or do you fear the violence that has to precede freedom?" Thus *The Old Gringo*, little more than a wan storefront excuse for stilted polemics and gratuitous pornography.

CARLOS FUENTES's is altogether a sorry case. He is a born novelist, endowed with boundless energy, sharp senses, an appetite for life, and a heady instinct for suspense, adventure, heroism, melodrama. These strengths are displayed to best advantage in one particular kind of writing at which Fuentes excels: the battle scene. Perhaps no other contemporary fiction writer has evoked with such gusto and such precision a charge of the cavalry.

Yet Fuentes's artistic gifts have been increasingly eroded over the years by what can only be described as an irresistible tendency toward derivativeness. Even Fuentes's best work has been pressed by him into a succession of aesthetic molds which have obscured his virtues and inflamed his

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faults—those faults being self-indulgence and a certain cheapness of mind.

Similarly, the encroachment of politics upon Fuentes's novels has led increasingly to the recession of character and thought. In a true novel of ideas—and whether or not the reader finds the ideas themselves persuasive—there always remains an inner sanctum of human life and character upon which theory-mongering cannot intrude. In *Anna Karenina*, for example, it is that place where Levin is a man, happy, confused, despairing by turns, and not merely a populist possessed by notions of agrarian reform. Fuentes's earliest novels maintain such a place, in which social condemnation and social prescription do not yet smother the irrepressibly natural longings of his characters to be rude to a dressmaker, to kiss a girl's neck, to lie in bed an extra hour, to chisel a cabdriver out of his fare, to own five acres of land. In his later work, however, and increasingly so as his career has progressed, human life with all its confusions and delights has receded, and the novel of ideas has instead turned into a kind of political demonstration, carefully marshaled by a very small and very loud party, with characters serving as banners and the sloganeering author as the only scheduled speaker.

THERE is, in the end, something peculiarly dated and off-center about Fuentes's work, and in this the novelist perhaps most shows himself a child of his native land. Mexico's intellectual elite has long been possessed by a peculiarly vehement sense of isolation, a sense of having been expelled from the paradise of European culture and planted in a bloody wilderness. The lengths to which Carlos Fuentes, for one, has traveled to escape this curse of isolation, and to reenter paradise, are extraordinary, but finally it has to be said of his assertively cosmopolitan fiction that underneath the imported velvet can be perceived the limbs of an anxious provincialism, still parading the latest styles from the capital after next year's line has already been introduced.

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Religion in Post-Protestant America

Peter L. Berger

In June 1985 the U.S. Supreme Court overruled an Alabama statute authorizing public schools in that state to observe a one-minute silence "for meditation or voluntary prayer." The reasoning behind the decision was that the statute represented an establishment of religion and thereby violated the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, which states that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

I was abroad a few weeks after this decision and was put in the position of trying to explain it to a group of by no means unfriendly Europeans. It was not an easy task. Their first puzzlement—how is it that an act of a state legislature can be overruled on the basis of an amendment specifically referring to acts of Congress?—was relatively easy to dispel. I explained that the Fourteenth Amendment had "nationalized" all the rights spelled out in the first ten amendments to the federal Constitution. Fortunately, no one asked me to explain just what the Fourteenth Amendment was in the first place, or I would have had to discourse at length on the way in which an act intended to outlaw slavery came to bear such a grave additional burden. But there was no way I could deal with their second puzzlement: how a minute of silence in a classroom of noisy schoolchildren could possibly endanger the religious liberty of Americans. We are not an easy people to understand.

Sidney Mead, the eminent American church historian, has described the United States as "a nation with the soul of a church." The phrase is apt and serves well to illuminate various aspects of the American national character, such as its deep-rooted sense of historic mission and its inveterate moralism.

If the nation is churchlike, then surely the Supreme Court is its most obviously ecclesiastical institution, endlessly engaged in interpreting and reinterpreting the sacred text on which the nation-church is supposed to be based. As Muslims call Jews and Christians people of the Book, the United States may be called a polity of the Book. No wonder we have more lawyers, both in absolute numbers and per capita, than any other country on earth. And at the pinnacle of this hierarchy of clerks are those whose business is constitutional exegesis in the federal courts, a business with striking similarities to the scholasticisms spawned by those religious traditions (notably Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) that derive from a revelation in a holy book.

Scholastic interpretations evolve from generation to generation; after a while, it becomes a little difficult to relate the latest exegetical exercise to the original meaning of the texts at issue. Some look altogether askance at the effort; these are the judicial activists, who, like Roman Catholic theorists of the Church, put their faith less in the original texts than in the institutional process by which they are transmitted. Others, our strict constructionists, recapitulate the classical Protestant effort to get back to the texts—though this often involves them in rather complicated intellectual acrobatics, for no amount of determination can change the fact that present-day America is a very different place from the America in which the Constitution was written.

As several recent books make clear, the men who drafted the First Amendment not only did not have in mind what later exegetes have imputed to them, but different ones among them had quite different things in mind. In view of the historical evidence, for example, it is hard to sustain the later interpretation that the two clauses of the First Amendment, the "establishment" clause and the "free-exercise" clause, implied a balanced theory of church-state relations. In any case, the main concern of those who drafted the amendment was not to formulate a positive statement about the rights of religion but rather to make sure that the new national institutions (some members of Congress balked at the very word "national") would not usurp rights and powers won in the several states. What is more, the present wording was arrived at fairly quickly after bargaining over several discarded alternatives, as Congress was anxious to get on to other matters.

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This is how Thomas Curry puts it in *The First Freedoms: Church and State in America to the Passage of the First Amendment*:*

> The passage of the First Amendment constituted a symbolic act, a declaration for the future, an assurance to those nervous about the federal government that it was not going to reverse any of the guarantees for religious liberty won by the revolutionary states.... Congress approached the subject in a somewhat hasty and absent-minded manner. To examine the two clauses of the amendment as a carefully worded analysis of church-state relations would be to overburden them.

That is a historian's judgment. It goes without saying that lawyers and constitutional theorists are not likely to be much restrained by it: overburdening texts is their vocation.

From Curry, and from William Lee Miller† and A. James Reichley** as well, we get a vivid picture of the bewildering variety of the colonies in the matter of religious arrangements (as indeed in everything else). There was New England, dominated by the powerful Puritan presence—although with a sharp divergence between theocratic Massachusetts and latitudinarian Rhode Island. There was Virginia with its Anglican establishment, which was latitudinarian in its own way, permitting the sort of mellow deism that characterized most of the great Virginians of the period, notably Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and, last but not least, George Washington. Maryland and Pennsylvania were two different experiments in religious liberty, the first a rather short-lived attempt at Catholic libertarianism, the second, rooted in Quaker ideology, leading to what was surely the most motley collection of religious eccentrics in 18th-century Western civilization. And New York, with its tradition of Dutch mercantilism, demonstrated that religious liberty could be the fruit as much of commercial pragmatism as of lofty ideas.

It is one of the miracles of American history that the representatives of these discrepant political entities could agree on anything; possibly the First Amendment was one of their less miraculous agreements, since no one desired to see the new nation institutionalize church-state relations along the lines of the English establishment. In this, as is not unusual for a revolutionary coalition, they were mainly united in what they were against.

MILLER devotes a large part of his book to two representative if wildly divergent individuals, James Madison and Roger Williams. He makes a good case for seeing these men as prototypes of the two principal traditions of religious liberty in the American republic. Madison, of course, was one of the great Virginians—a gentleman of ample means, a friend of Jefferson, a relaxed deist comfortable in the Anglican church, an advocate of "republican virtue" in the spirit of the American Enlightenment. Williams, born amid the murderous fanaticisms of English Protestant dissent, was a cantankerous Puritan, no less so for eventually concluding that religious liberty was a desideratum in this world. Williams arrived at this conclusion not out of any Enlightenment ideas about the nobility of man's quest for truth but out of his deeply Calvinistic conviction that, all existing churches being hopelessly corrupt, none must be given the power to coerce.

Out of these twin roots, Miller writes, grew a set of peculiar political and ecclesiastical attitudes. Enlightenment skepticism brought the idea that since no certainties were available in the area of religion, tolerance was the only reasonable position. Protestant sectarianism contributed a strong sense of theological certitude which, however, included the conviction that, since the state and any state-established church would always misuse its power, the church that was faithful to the truth of the gospel must be fiercely independent.

These discrepant ideas combined, at a particular juncture of history, to create a unique fabric of church-state relations. To be sure, circumstances helped a great deal: even in the absence of these ideas, it would have been difficult to replicate on American soil any of the religious establishments of Europe. There were simply too many different groups, too many religio-political interests, for any one to establish dominance. Willy-nilly, they had to learn to live with one another. But whether the ideas were conveniently at hand to legitimate pressing pragmatic concerns, or whether the ideas had history-changing efficacy of their own (or whether, more likely, both things were true), the arrangement so created is with us today. And so, indeed, are the two traditions out of which it grew. Thus, regularly, lawyers for the American Civil Liberties Union with nary a religious certitude in their bones find themselves on the same side on church-state issues—i.e., the side of strict separation—with born-again Baptists who, if one is to believe them, have never doubted their orthodox faith by one iota.

Another thing made clear by these authors is that within the institutional framework of liberty brought about by this paradoxical conspiracy of skeptics and believers, there has been an unending intrusion of religiously based values into the public life of the nation. The Constitution, as it came to be interpreted, might well have set up a wall of separation between church and state, but it most certainly did not set up a wall between religion and politics. Reichley traces such interventions right through the 1984 presidential election, and

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* Oxford University Press, 276 pp., $24.95.

† *The First Liberty: Religion and the American Public*, Knopf, 373 pp., $24.95.

** *Religion in American Public Life*, Brookings, 402 pp., $31.95.

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he clearly expects them to continue, possibly with renewed force, in the coming years.

Indeed, the "nation with the soul of a church" has always had a deeply religious tendency to turn political campaigns into great crusades. Two high-points were the anti-slavery and the temperance campaigns. The first achieved permanent victory (though at the price of a bloody civil war), the latter only a brief and Pyrrhic victory. Both demonstrated the enormous capacity of churches and church-related groups to mobilize Americans for a political campaign defined as a struggle between virtue and vice. The format of these two classical crusades continues to reproduce itself in this country whenever political agendas are infused with high religious pathos. There is the same unwillingness to compromise or to weigh costs against benefits (prophets do not calculate), the same tendency to diabolize the opposition, and the same curious alliance of clergy and activist women that in other contexts the historian Ann Douglas has dubbed the "feminization of American culture."

In recent decades we have seen three such religio-political eruptions, each characterized by this now-typical format: the civil-rights movement, the anti-war movement with its various Left-leaning offshoots, and, most recently, the powerful phenomenon that Richard John Neuhaus has aptly called the "bourgeois insurgency," once again generating miscellaneous offshoots but with the anti-abortion movement at its core.

These movements have mobilized different strata of the American population and the last two are in sharp antagonism to each other. Yet all three stand in "apostolic succession" to all the earlier crusades of moral fervor sustained by religious certitude. Perhaps a final irony is that, today, each movement defines its opponent as an illegitimate intrusion of religion into politics. Thus the Reverend Jesse Jackson and the Reverend Jerry Falwell accuse each other of misusing their religious status for political ends, and the followers of each believe (sincerely, one may stipulate) that any increase in the power of the opposing movement will lead to an age of inquisitorial intolerance and oppression.

To be sure, religious liberty is not an American monopoly. It is a common feature of all democracies and one of the important legitimations of the democratic form of government. Yet the United States can validly claim to have most successfully institutionalized religious liberty. Given the heterogeneity of the American population, this has been a remarkable achievement, all the more so when one compares the civic peace that has characterized relations among religious groups here with the record of many other societies. In this achievement, as speakers on many patriotic occasions regularly and correctly point out, present-day America demonstrates the wisdom of the generation that produced the Constitution. Here, too, we see a remarkable continuity between past and present.

But it is just as obvious that the social environment of religion in America has changed profoundly since the time of the First Amendment. The most important change can be stated quite simply: the Protestant social and cultural establishment has ended. Indeed, with just a little license one can speak today of a post-Protestant America.

The term "Protestant establishment" may at first sound grating. Nevertheless, although the Constitution effectively prevented the legal establishment of Protestantism, first in the new nation and then in the states, it did not and could not change the fact that American society was crucially shaped by Protestantism. Its social order, its ethos, even its manners bore an unmistakably Protestant cast, readily recognized as such especially by observers who were not themselves Protestant (Alexis de Tocqueville, for example).

Although to some extent this remains the case today, the social and cultural domination of the country by a cohesive Protestant elite has been severely weakened. Other groups have successfully made their way, different elites have been formed, and both society and culture have become vastly more pluralistic than could have been imagined even at the turn of this century. The Protestant character of American civilization has become more of an echo, a nuanced survival of what used to be a robust socio-cultural reality. John Murray Cuddihy has aptly described this as a change from a Protestant ethic to a Protestant etiquette: the fervid moral intensity of the earlier period has become a mood, a morally neutral civility—that "Protestant smile," now widely diffused among Americans from every conceivable ethnic and religious background, which continues to impress newcomers to these shores as either heartwarming ("Americans are so friendly") or hypocritical ("they don't really mean it").

The major reason for the change has been the pattern of immigration, bringing masses of non-Protestant people, especially Catholics and Jews, into society. Today, the influx of Latin Americans continues the gradual "Catholicization" of American society (though one should note that Latin American Catholicism differs in important ways from that of Southern and Eastern Europe, not to mention the very particular Catholicism of the Irish). A new and potentially significant factor is the large immigration from Asia. Although religious statistics in the United States are not models of exactitude, it has been reasonably claimed that Hawaii is the first state of the union in which Christians are a minority. Anyone driving out of Honolulu on the Pali Highway, past edifices and shrines of Asian cults of every description, can easily visualize an America far more pluralistic than the one described in 1955 by Will Herberg in his perceptive book, *Protestant-Catholic-Jew.*

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(Public-service advertisements on Honolulu buses: "Attend the church, synagogue, or shrine of your choice!")

There may be another, more subtle reason for the demise of the Protestant establishment. Those at its core came to lose their own belief in it. There were cultural as well as political failures of nerve. E. Digby Baltzell, the only American sociologist who has studied the Protestant upper class with care and without destructive intent, has traced this socio-cultural decline in several excellent books; the recent history of the Episcopal church, once the elite denomination *par excellence*, offers the best insight into it. One glance at the weekly program of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City provides wondrous examples of the Protestant transformation from self-confidence to a nervous and guilt-prone search for some way, any way, of socio-cultural survival.

As long as the Protestant establishment was a reality, it provided a reliable symbolic center despite (perhaps even because of) the legal disestablishment of religion. Its inner decline, combined with the increasingly rigorous interpretation by the courts of church-state separation, has led to the situation characterized by Richard John Neuhaus as the "naked public square": that is, a public life increasingly swept clean of the religious symbols that used to legitimate it and make it plausible.

This is a problem in and of itself. Society, deprived of plausible legitimating symbols, increasingly becomes a merely contractual arrangement. Although this may be fine as long as there are no serious problems confronting a society, when such problems do arise it becomes more and more difficult to motivate people to make sacrifices for any collective purpose. Emile Durkheim, in his last great work, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, argued that a society will not survive unless people are prepared, if necessary, to die for it. Human beings are not prepared to die for a contract based on the pragmatic accommodation of interests. When, a few years ago, the Carter administration reintroduced draft registration (not the draft itself, just registration for a possible draft), a picture that appeared in many newspapers showed a demonstration of Princeton students, one of whom carried a poster with the inscription, "Nothing is worth dying for." To say that this is a problem is an understatement at a moment when American democracy faces the greatest military threat ever to its survival.

But there is more to the matter. As Neuhaus has observed, the public square will not remain "naked": other contents inevitably come to fill it. In our case today, the contents are those of "secular humanism." The phrase is used pejoratively by, for example, the followers of Jerry Falwell, but in fact it quite aptly catches the gist of the values, antiseptically free of religious referents and emphatically humanistic, that have been elevated to the status of a largely tacit and unacknowledged new cultural establishment. It is precisely such an ethos of "secular humanism" that is embodied, for example, in Lawrence Kohlberg's program of "moral education" and in the various pedagogic systems based on "values clarification." It is the ethos of a new, post-Protestant establishment (many if not most of whose members are themselves of elite Protestant ancestry).

A KEY problem of our time is the relation between this new elite and the rest of the American people. In recent years there has been an impressive accumulation of new data about American religion (as in the survey on American values undertaken by the Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance Company, or the superb *All Faithful People*, by Theodore Caplow *et al.*). These data show that the majority of Americans are as furiously religious as ever—and very probably *more* religion than they were when Tocqueville marveled at this quality of American life.

The most dramatic expression of American religious turbulence today has been the upsurge of evangelicalism in its various forms. At least since the mid-1970's—Jimmy Carter's campaign for the Presidency can be taken as a convenient marker—traditional religious and moral beliefs, which had been assumed to survive, if at all, in the hinterlands of society, suddenly erupted into the center of public life. Even those safely located within the cultural enclaves of "secular humanism" have been forced to take notice of this veritable explosion of religious fervor, first in bewilderment, then (especially as significant elements of the evangelical world became mobilized in the service of Right-of-Center political causes) with growing alarm.

The evangelical renascence, though, is only the most spectacular expression of the perduring religiosity of most of the American people. With the exception of the so-called "mainline" Protestant denominations (a misnomer if ever there was one, as these denominations are increasingly marginal to the nation's religious life), it has manifested itself elsewhere as well. Spurred on by Rome, especially under the present papacy, powerful neotraditionalist impulses have made themselves felt in the Catholic community. There has occurred an increasingly robust religious revival within all three denominations of American Judaism. Least noticed but of great potential importance have been the increasing vitality and "Americanization" of Eastern Orthodox Christianity, now no longer an ethnic enclave. There has been the spectacular increase of the Mormons. Whatever else most Americans are, they are *not* "secular humanists."

These developments have created serious intellectual difficulties for those (like myself) who thought that modernization and secularization were inexorably linked phenomena. To say the

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least, the United States appears to be an exception to this linkage. Indeed, if one compares sociological data on religion worldwide, America sticks out as a remarkable exception. The most modernized societies, notably in Western Europe and in Japan, are in fact high on any secularization scale, be it subjective (recording what people say they believe) or objective (recording what people actually do in terms of religious practice). The prototypes of secular modernity are the Scandinavian countries, with Sweden in the unchallenged lead. At the other end of the list would be societies like India.

When one looks at the United States as a whole, in terms of the subjective and objective indicators of religiosity, one sees a remarkable resemblance to India (the content, needless to say, being different). Yet if one moves around in the cultural centers of America, one breathes a remarkably Scandinavian air. (Could this be why there are so many Volvos on Ivy League campuses?) And thereby hangs a tale of great significance: when it comes to religion, America is an India, with a little Sweden superimposed.

In more conventional social-scientific language we might say that secularization in America today tends to be class-specific. It is most diffused in the college-educated upper middle class—or, more pointedly, in those strata that Irving Kristol and others have called the New Class, people who derive their livelihood from the production and distribution of symbolic knowledge. It is least diffused in the old middle class, the lower middle class, and the "respectable" working class. This means that the general drama of secularization and counter-secularization has been drawn into a major conflict between classes. In America today and very likely in other Western democracies as well, the New Class is increasingly resented by other strata in society, and not the least factor in this resentment is the hegemony exercised by the New Class over the institutions of elite culture, including large segments of the educational system and the media.

The evangelical upsurge may at least in part be understood as a rebellion of other groups against the culture of the secularized New Class, and especially against the coercive imposition of that culture on children in the public schools. Thus it makes sense that education has been one of the major battlefields in this conflict. The "Indians" are rising against the "Swedes," and neotraditionalist religious symbols are weapons in this uprising. (To say this, of course, in no way negates the sincerely religious motives of those engaged in the various evangelical campaigns.)

There is also a specifically religious dynamic here, in which counter-secularization takes a more or less fundamentalist form. This dynamic can be observed in many parts of the world, not least in the Muslim societies. In the United States the ironic fact is that an overall social climate of tolerance and relativism has kept on being disturbed by seemingly irrational eruptions of unbridled fanaticism. The various "revolutions" and "liberations" of the last two decades provide a number of secular analogues. How can it be that all these nice people, many of them long-time smilers of the Protestant smile, have suddenly come out of the closet with their various agendas of absolute claims, non-negotiable demands, and the determination to pursue their purposes by any means necessary? How can Protestant niceness be so quickly replaced by rage?

This alternation becomes more understandable if one reflects on the psychic costs of pluralistic relativism. The latter is experienced by many as a great liberation, affording the opportunity to emerge from one's own narrow subculture into a broad milieu of cosmopolitanism, and in addition freeing one from all sorts of taboos and "repressions." But the price of liberation is the loss, or at least the weakening, of all certitude—social, moral, religious. Pan-tolerant individuals are thus peculiarly conversion-prone, and conversions can be sudden and violent. The same individuals may quite frequently come to experience as oppressive that which was once liberating; their rage is a reaction to the intuition that they have been had. In this light, the emergence of various movements with claims to absolute certitude is no longer surprising, although the choice an individual makes among the movements available in the ideological marketplace will remain a matter of biographical chance or social location.

But to return to the church-state issues with which we began: Reichley gives a helpful overview of the different positions in play today. The two most important are held by those who advocate a strict separation and by those who would somehow accommodate the religious character of the American people. Both positions (there are, of course, many gradations in each) face serious difficulties.

The doctrine of strict separation flies in the face of a social reality that remains persistently, stubbornly religious. The unending turmoil engendered by the Supreme Court decision on prayer in the public schools is the best example of this collision: whatever may have been the careful legal reasoning behind the decision, the fact remains that millions of Americans have perceived it as a solemn declaration that, their most dearly held beliefs and values having been disavowed by the highest authority of the Republic, their country has become officially godless. The political difficulties this has led to are evident.

But there is a deeper difficulty. As I have already noted, every society, and a democratically governed society more than others, requires legitimation. It requires the belief that it is morally justified. And in the nature of the case, such legiti-

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mation cannot be invented *ex nihilo*, it must be credible in terms of beliefs and values that people actually hold. When a people is as religious as the American people, it is going to be very difficult to purge the official legitimations of society of all religious symbols and still have them remain credible. The doctrine of strict separation (not just between the state and specific denominations, but between the state and religion as such) has thus contributed to a crisis of legitimation.

The accommodationist position, however, faces serious difficulties as well. These are all grounded in the equally stubborn reality of American pluralism. Just *which* religious symbols are to be accommodated in the "public square"? The answer to this question has usually been rendered in terms of the so-called Judeo-Christian tradition. One may leave aside for the moment how this answer will sit with Hawaiian Buddhists and with agnostics (not all of them members of the New Class) who have experienced their emancipation from various Christian or Jewish subcultures as a personal liberation; taken together these groups still constitute a minority of the American population, and perhaps they, or most of them, might settle for a few Judeo-Christian symbols as an acceptable price for civic peace. But there is the more intractable fact that those who do identify with that great tradition, in its various denominational forms, are themselves deeply divided as to its moral meaning.

America has been very successful in dealing with its religious pluralism. The *moral* pluralism that has now emerged will be much more difficult to deal with. Currently the most dramatic expression of this is the abortion issue. What symbolic accommodation can be struck between two groups, each containing roughly 50 percent of the American people, one of whom perceives abortion as involving the fundamental right of a woman over her own body and the other as being an act of homicide? How can such an accommodation be struck when each side makes use of religious symbols and religious language to legitimate its position?

On the other hand, American society has long experience with settling seemingly irreconcilable positions. And the American polity has developed a genius for institutionalizing such settlements. Barring national disasters of catastrophic scope, it is not unreasonable to expect that new formulas can be found to institutionalize new balances, new compromises. Religious institutions will certainly have a major role to play in such a new settlement. But they will be in a better position to play that role if they draw back from their respective positions of partisan advocacy (most of it very class-specific indeed) and return to what has been their most creative function, that of mediation. Churches as mediating institutions are more likely to contribute to the solution of these problems than churches as partisan armies.

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Gorbachev and the Jews

Allan Kagedan

IN EARLY 1985, on the eve of Mikhail Gorbachev's accession to power, rumors began circulating of a possible resumption of large-scale Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union. During the 1970's, over 250,000 Soviet Jews had received permission to leave the USSR, including 51,000 in 1979 alone. In the 1980's, however, the figures had declined precipitously, dropping as low as 896 in 1984, and 1,140 in 1985.

The first Soviet hint at a change in emigration policy came in February 1985, when the chairman of the Soviet State Bank, V.S. Alkhimov, reportedly told a visiting U.S. trade delegation that "if good relations were restored with the United States, 50,000 Jewish émigrés annually would be no problem." In July, there was a second report, this time that the Soviet Ambassador to France, Yuli Vorontsov, had offered his Israeli counterpart large-scale Jewish emigration in exchange for two concessions: an end to Israeli and American Jewish criticism of the USSR, and a pledge to direct emigrating Jews exclusively to Israel.

Gorbachev's visit to France last October brought the rumors to a head. Journalists now wrote of a possible airlift of Soviet Jews, either directly from the USSR or else via Poland to Israel, on French aircraft. The logistics of such an emigration would tend to limit it to no more than a few hundred families, but it would still serve as a dramatic prelude to the November summit meeting between Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan.

As it turned out, the summit came and went without an airlift. Several Russian spouses of American citizens were allowed to leave, and so was the longtime Jewish refusenik Ilya Essas. But the release of these few carefully selected individuals was a far cry from the major exodus of 20,000-50,000 Jews annually that had been talked about. Then in January of this year, just prior to the release of Anatoly Shcharansky, a Soviet diplomat in Washington started the rumor mills going again when he suggested to an official of an American Jewish organization that a renewal of emigration might be at hand, along with the resumption of diplomatic relations with Israel, severed by the USSR in 1967.

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That the Western media took all these hints at face value is hardly surprising. Western observers have long maintained that Soviet emigration policy depends on the climate of U.S.-Soviet relations, citing as evidence the decline of emigration after 1979 when the Senate, in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, refused to ratify the SALT II treaty. Gorbachev clearly wished to improve superpower relations: what better way to warm up the negotiating atmosphere than by releasing Soviet Jews? Then, too, the Soviet leader was said to be a modernizer with a craving for American trade and technology: what better means of procuring American treasures than to let Soviet Jews go, as Leonid Brezhnev had done in the 1970's?

Yet Gorbachev did not act in accordance with this line of analysis, and the signs are few indeed that he will do so in the near future. One theory that has been advanced to explain this inaction is that Gorbachev has not yet consolidated his power sufficiently to make such a crucial decision. The trouble with this idea is that there is no way of measuring "consolidation." The process may take a year or a decade; indeed, judging from the case of Nikita Khrushchev, ousted after six years in office, it may even be reversible. But even if the consolidation hypothesis is accepted, it simply begs the question.

In his recently published memoirs, the Soviet defector Arkady Shevchenko provides an interesting glimpse of Soviet decision-making on the question of emigration. Shevchenko, who served in the Soviet foreign service for twenty years before his defection, maintains that foreign-policy considerations play less of a role in Soviet emigration policy than one might have thought. As he describes it, there is a constant struggle in the Soviet government between the advocates of emigration, who see no reason to hold onto Jewish "troublemakers" with their public demonstrations and all the rest of it, and the opponents, who believe that letting the Jews go would give rise to all sorts of intractable problems domestically. In this contest, Shevchenko says, the views of the foreign ministry were "neither sought nor welcomed." They came into play only when the arguments of the two opposing camps appeared to be evenly balanced.

This does not seem to be the case at the mo-

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ment. Moreover, there are good reasons why *any* Soviet leader would find it troublesome to let the Jews go, and to Gorbachev at the present time the reasons are if anything more compelling than they were to Brezhnev. To see why, it is necessary to take a look at Soviet internal affairs, beginning with the condition of Soviet Jews today.

According to the 1979 Soviet census, there are 1.8 million Jews in the Soviet Union, constituting .69 percent of the Soviet population. (The actual figures may be slightly higher since the penalties of being identified as Jewish could entail some underreporting.) Soviet Jews are an aging group with a low birth rate, and with a significant rate of intermarriage. Though their numbers have been dwindling steadily since 1959 (2.27 million), they are still the third largest Jewish community in the world, after the United States and Israel, and will probably remain so for years to come.

In the matter of emigration, however, where the Soviet Jews live and what they do are more important considerations than their numbers. As of 1979, nearly 86 percent of Soviet Jews were living in one of the three so-called Slavic republics of the USSR—the Russian, the Ukrainian, and the Byelorussian. To put it more precisely, they were clustered in the major cities of these three republics: Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, and Minsk.

As for what they do, figures from 1973 indicate that Jews then accounted for 6.1 percent of all scientific workers, 8.8 percent of all scientists, and 14 percent of all scientists with the rank of doctor (equivalent to a post-Ph.D. degree).

It is true that these proportions have been drastically reduced of late by government-approved discriminatory policies and practices, which have restricted the number of Jews entering the professions and prevented those already there from advancing in their careers. Between 1968 and 1981, thanks to discrimination, the overall number of Jews enrolled full time at a university dropped by half, outpacing demographic factors and emigration. Quotas limit the number of Jews admitted into scientific establishments, and they are virtually barred from sensitive research institutes on grounds of being poor security risks. Even among the cultural elite, according to one recent émigré, a little bit of open anti-Semitism is considered "good form." And of course Jews have been further relegated to the fringes of Soviet society by the incessant campaign of vilification against Israel and Zionism which has been going on in the USSR since the 1960's, and which has continued under Gorbachev.

The campaign of discrimination and propaganda aimed at Soviet Jews has seriously eroded, although it has not yet reversed, their disproportionate representation in the more advanced sectors of Soviet society, and it is directly responsible for the fact that some 400,000 Jews have completed the first step in the emigration process (officially requesting permission to join families in Israel). But even while the Soviet regime treats Jews as outsiders, permitting them to emigrate is another matter.

The Soviet leadership realized a long time ago that the threat of force, while a powerful tool for curbing dissent, is of limited value when it comes to controlling an empire that spans 8.6 million square miles and contains over one hundred separate nationalities. In addition to force, the ruling elite must convince the population that life under Communism is better than life in Western countries. The Kremlin spends tens of millions of dollars annually jamming radio broadcasts from Western countries in order to prevent "dangerous" ideas from infecting the Soviet populace, ideas that might lead the public to demand changes in the direction of political reform. Soviet publicists work tirelessly at depicting the West as heartless, immoral, materialistic, racially discriminatory, and constantly on the verge of economic ruin—in contrast to the equality and justice prevailing in the East.

The very existence of an emigration movement raises obvious questions about these claims to superiority. What the regime fears is not just that large numbers of Soviet citizens will themselves demand to emigrate but also that those who stay behind will be led to question Soviet dogma. Among other things, those who emigrate remain in contact with family members left behind, thus opening up another channel of information about life in the West which threatens the ideology of control.

In addition to undercutting Soviet doctrine about the relative merits of life in the East and West, Soviet leaders fear that Jewish emigration will have a severe impact on nationality relations. On the simplest level, it may spark similar demands from other nationalities. If the Jews are permitted to leave, why not the Soviet Germans and Armenians, who likewise have Western advocates calling for their release? And even if these other groups were not led to demand emigration *per se*, it has been axiomatic in the Kremlin ever since Stalin that any assertion by one nationality of its rights will trigger automatic expressions of what *Pravda* calls "chauvinism, nationalism, and parochialism" on the part of other nationality groups. If Jews are rewarded for their ethnic stubbornness, will not other groups be emboldened, if not to apply for exit visas, then at least to become more resistant to encroachment on their cultures? For decades, the Kremlin has been pressuring non-Russian nationalities to speak Russian, abandon their religion and culture, and merge into "the Soviet people." Though the campaign has become more sophisticated in recent years, as Soviet leaders have come to realize that the task of homogenizing Soviet society will be long and drawn-out, the ultimate goal of Soviet nationality policy is still uniformity, and Jewish self-assertiveness threatens it.

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Beyond setting a bad example for other nationality groups, the Jewish desire to emigrate also poses a fundamental ideological problem in its own right. The Jews are in a sense the perfect candidates for the kind of cultural homogeneity envisaged in Soviet nationality policy. Owing to their special historical circumstances—the fact that they are city dwellers and nearly all of them speak Russian (thanks in large part to the Nazi slaughter of millions of their Yiddish-speaking brethren and the dismemberment by Stalin of their cultural institutions)—the Jews are among the most "advanced" of the Soviet nationalities in the matter of cultural assimilation. In accordance with Lenin's prophecy, they "lost" their own language and culture and, with no territorial unit of their own (Birobidzhan aside), have been able to mix freely with other nationality groups. The Jews, in short, have been freed from the crutches on which so many of the other nationalities still depend. To Soviet leaders the desire of this particular nationality group to take flight (not to mention the sudden interest among its younger members in studying Hebrew) seems like some atavistic repudiation of the future—that future which supposedly belongs to Marxism-Leninism, and in whose name the sacrifices of the present are rationalized. The fact that the Jews are seeking nothing more than the exercise of nationality rights formally guaranteed by Soviet law is, in this view, beside the point. If Jews have seen the light of socialism, why should they want to revert to nationalistic darkness?

A final consideration working against the release of Soviet Jews is the regime's determination to outstrip the West militarily. Since the primary mission of Soviet science is to develop technology in the service of military needs, there is constant fear of a "brain drain" of Jewish scientists and technicians. So fearful are the Soviets of losing qualified personnel that they imposed a "diploma tax" in 1972 on all Jewish professionals who were given permission to depart. This may seem to fly in the face of the campaign to reduce the number of Jews in the scientific and cultural establishments altogether, but the two phenomena are actually just opposite sides of the same coin.

In the 1970's, in the heyday of Jewish emigration, the Soviets tried to limit the damage by giving exit visas mainly to Jews living on the geographic, sociological, and economic periphery of Soviet society. Thus, between 1968 and 1980, the Soviets permitted 60 percent of the Jewish population of the Georgian republic, 50 percent of the Jewish population of the Lithuanian republic, and 36 percent of the Jewish population of the Latvian republic to exit. For the three Slavic republics, on the other hand, the comparable figures were: Ukrainian, 12 percent; Byelorussian, 7 percent; and Russian, 4 percent. In attempting to account for this difference, the conclusion is inescapable that when it came to a choice, the Soviets were willing (and may actually have preferred) to do without the more traditionally-oriented Jews from the non-Slavic republics, but far less willing to do without their more acculturated and professionally advanced brethren from the Slavic republics.

But the reservoir of Jews from non-Slavic regions has to some degree been depleted. There are only 28,000 Jews remaining in the Georgian republic, another 28,000 in Latvia, and 15,000 in Lithuania. The Uzbek republic still has 100,000 Jews left, but many of them (or their parents) originally came from the Slavic republics during World War II, so they tend to have more in common with the more Russified Jews. That leaves Moldavia, with a Jewish population of 80,000, but even this substantial number is not sufficient to bring the total figure up to 250,000—the number of Jews who left during the emigration of the 70's. To match this figure, the Soviets would have no choice but to allow significant numbers of Jews from Moscow, Leningrad, and Kiev to go as well.

The problem with letting these heartland Jews out involves not just their professional qualifications, but also their likely destination. In the 1970's these Jews, in markedly greater proportions than Jews from the other regions, opted for passage to the United States or other Western countries rather than Israel. One can assume that the same would be true of any new mass emigration from these cities—a prospect the Soviets cannot possibly contemplate with equanimity. Emigration to Israel has its headaches, to be sure—notably in Soviet relations with the Arabs—but at least it does not pose grave ideological problems. The choice of Israel can always be presented on the home front as a manifestation of reactionary nationalism. Emigration to the bastion of world capitalism, on the other hand, is akin to heresy and calls into question everything Marxism-Leninism is supposed to stand for.

GIVEN these negative considerations, there would seem to be little basis for the Soviets to change their current no-exit policy. To judge by his recent behavior, indeed, Gorbachev shows no intention of opening the gates, and in fact he seems to have developed at least a rhetorical strategy for dealing with his "Jewish problem" accordingly. As far as the outside world is concerned, that strategy is, in a nutshell, the same one advocated by Mikhail F. Nenashev, former editor of the flagship Communist-party newspaper, *Sovetskaia Rossiia*. Nenashev, offering pointers on the effective use of propaganda, urged Soviet leaders never to convey the impression—in responding to questions from foreign sources—that they were afraid to speak out on certain subjects.

Whether or not he owes it to Nenashev (who has since been promoted to run the entire Soviet publishing industry), this was the approach Gorbachev used in a French television interview last October when he was asked a question about the

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mistreatment of Soviet Jews. Not only was there no truth to the charge, he declared firmly, but Soviet Jews actually enjoyed *more* rights than Jews did "anywhere else in the entire world." Having thus taken the bull by the horns, Gorbachev went on to describe the significant role Jews play in Soviet "political and cultural life"—a point he would emphasize again in his celebrated exchange with Jesse Jackson during the Geneva summit.

Gorbachev specializes in provoking confusion whenever he makes public utterances on the Soviet Jewish question, especially on emigration policy. On one occasion he can state publicly (as he did on French television) that the regime stands by its policy on family reunification and will permit Soviet Jews with relatives in the West to depart. On other occasions he can take a different tone entirely, issuing stern warnings to the West (as he did in a recent speech in the Ukraine) that the Soviet Union scorns any notion of exchanging Jews for higher levels of trade and will tolerate no attempt by the United States "to try and use trade for interference in our internal affairs."

The purpose of this calculatedly ambiguous strategy is to keep Western observers guessing. By raising hopes for emigration one day and dashing them the next, all to extensive press coverage, Gorbachev succeeds in diverting attention from the actual plight of Soviet Jewry—not just the abysmally low emigration figures, but also the incidents of harassment, imprisonment, and intimidation of Hebrew teachers and emigration activists which have actually increased sharply in number since he took office in 1985.

DOMESTICALLY, also, in his dealings with the Soviet Jewish population, Gorbachev is following a far more sophisticated strategy than his predecessors, one designed to pacify Soviet Jewry and contain its discontents without actually making any real concessions. Thus, at a time when discriminatory practices against Soviet Jews remain at the highest level they have been since Stalin, the Soviet media are suddenly afire with accounts of anti-Semitism—in the West. Under Gorbachev's direction, isolated Western incidents of vandalism—against a synagogue or Jewish graveyard—have been magnified to the proportions of pogroms, and newspaper columns are peppered with appeals from the usual token Soviet Jewish notables beseeching the U.S. Congress and the Canadian Parliament to combat anti-Semitism in their respective countries. To drive the point home still further, the official government publishing house, Novosti, brought out a volume last year entitled *Jews in the USA: Through the Eyes of Americans*. Purporting to base itself on American sources, the book concludes that anti-Semitism still thrives in the United States, causing American Jews to "live in an atmosphere of perpetual fear and disillusionment with American reality."

If conditions are portrayed as being this bad in America, they have been made to seem even worse in Israel, via a barrage of propaganda designed to convince the Jews of the Soviet Union that emigration to this "racist," "genocidal" state, bent on slaughtering its own youth in a series of endless expansionist wars, would be a disastrous mistake. Whether concerning Israel or the United States, the message behind this manipulated version of reality is the same: stay put, be happy with your lot, you're better off where you are now.

On the cultural front, Gorbachev, like his predecessors, still refuses to allow Soviet Jews to study Hebrew or—with a few exceptions—practice their religion. He has, however, given a bit more breathing space to "official" Soviet Jewish culture, that is, Yiddish-language books, plays, and other cultural events. Last July there was a mini-series on Soviet television based on the Sholem Aleichem "Tevya the Dairyman" stories, and in December, the Jewish Chamber Music Theater troupe presented a program of "*Tum Balalaika* and Other Jewish National Songs" to a packed house in Moscow. The performers, many in their twenties and thirties, sang in Yiddish but spoke Russian between songs. In the same vein, Gorbachev has permitted a modicum of religious observance among older Jews: the Kiev Jewish community recently acquired a bakery for Passover *matzah*; the Moscow synagogue is undergoing repairs; a few younger rabbis are being trained in Hungary.

It is worth remembering in this connection that Nikita Khrushchev also presided over a miniature revival of Yiddish-language culture—in 1961, with the publication of the monthly *Sovetish Heymland*. But this gesture no more signaled any real change in Soviet policy toward the Jews than do the token concessions currently being offered by the Gorbachev regime. They are simply an attempt to inoculate Soviet Jews against emigration fever, and build up their tolerance for the hostility and unequal treatment they must endure daily.

In a sense, then, Gorbachev has turned the former Soviet approach to the problem of Soviet Jewry on its head. Instead of refusing to discuss it with Westerners, he and his officials are only too eager to talk about how happy and privileged the Jews are in the Soviet Union. And instead of keeping up the Marxist pretense that there is no such thing as a Jewish people, Gorbachev pointedly contrasts the condition of that segment of it which lives in the Soviet Union with its supposedly miserable fellows in Israel and the United States. By seeming to acknowledge occasionally that this people may even possess a culture of its own—if only in a version acceptable to Marxist doctrine—he attempts to manipulate Jewish expectations domestically and lull Western Jews into inaction.

In short, Gorbachev would prefer to keep Soviet Jews where they are, and is pursuing this aim far more cleverly than his predecessors.

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Close Calls

A Story

Johanna Kaplan

STRANGER IN PARADISE (?)

The stork swooped in on ever-elegant POLLY TREADWELL *at 12:25* A.M. *Wednesday with a 6-pound 8-ounce baby girl. It was a first for Polly, 39, who barely had time to drop the paint brush in her SoHo loft (a one-time highest-tech showcase for former mate, architecture's Ayatollah of Minimalism,* WADE PRENTICE*) so her fingers could do the walking to whistle up her current spouse (of two months), that tricoastal, high-rolling whiz-kid,* JOEL WISOTSKY.

And where'd she locate the megabucked mega-Wiz (who once brought us the transatlantic pre-punk sounds of Close Call and Emergency Vehicle)? Where else but Paradise—the club, that is. Dancing the night away, you say? Out with a sweet young thing? You should know better, nightlife mavens! Paradise is closed *on Wednesdays. Absolutely* No Entrada! *And we do mean* doused.

So what was Wisotsky doing roaming around the oh-so-chic shuttered premises, huddled with owners MARTY MELTZER *and* JEFF GORELICK*? Scouting a (possible) location for son Seth's bar-mitzvah party is the only whisper we've heard so far. But c'mon now fellas, when Wisotsky takes a stroll around pricey real estate, he isn't there to check out the chopped liver, is he? So what's the story?*

No one is uttering a single word, and our phone calls to Wisotsky's ex, shrink RONA AUSLANDER (she *kept her couch at the East Side townhouse,* he's *still got the deed to the shack in the Hamptons) only helped* us *relate to the good doctor's answering service.*

When we don't know, we just feel rotten. *So stay tuned, fans, and well, what the heck, kids,* Mazel Tov!

EVERYONE, even in the old days of their first apartment (not the completely squalid one in the East Village, that was always really Joel's), but their first apartment together—the dingy three-room walk-up above the Hungarian bakery near Columbia—everyone, even in those days, would mention, sooner or later, how much Joel and Rona looked alike. But this was simply random ethnographic data, arbitrary ethnographic *chance,* so that Rona, whenever she heard it said as if it were supposed to *mean* something—long-limbed, restless Rona would immediately give a quick, sullen toss of her head, and make that dissatisfied *click!* sound with her tongue.

"How do you do that?" Joel often asked, once even peering into her mouth at the dinner table. "I thought only Miriam Makeba could do it. What'd you do, Ro? You got it off a record?"

Click! went Rona's tongue against the roof of her mouth as she sullenly tossed her head to the side and immediately got up from the table.

"Just tell me one thing," Joel called after her as she slammed the bedroom door and went off to work on a paper (by this time Rona was in social-work school, she had already had it with anthro), "When do I turn over the espresso pot?"

"We don't *have* one that you turn over," Rona screamed through the crumbling wall, the furious vibration of her voice shaking down another piece of plaster above the sink. "Maybe that's what you had with Jill Rabinoff."

"I didn't have *anything* with Jill Rabinoff," Joel said. "I didn't even have Jill Rabinoff." He stared into her nearly full plate of perfectly good, though no longer very appetizing, lasagna. Where was the promise of the once-fragrant kitchen? "She only used to come over when Mike Landis—"

"I don't see *how* you would possibly *know*," Rona, coolly sauntering out of the bedroom, refused even to throw him a glance. Barefoot, and wearing the lavender silk kimono her father had brought her from Japan, she squinted around the kitchen, saying, "No doubt you were both much too stoned to concern yourselves with such fine distinctions. . . . Where's my *Wayward Youth*? Shit, no, not *Wayward Youth*, that's not the one. It's *Children Who Hate*. Where's my *Children Who Hate*? I need it for a reference, I'll need it for the footnotes, I'll need it for the bibliography—this paper is due tomorrow—oh my God, where *is* it?"

Joel said, "What color is it?"

"What *color* is it! It's a book, Joel! *A book!* But how would you *know*? You cannot put it on a turntable and spin it—oh thank God!" she abrupt-

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ly cried, plucking out a thin white paperback and cradling it. "Just in case you didn't realize," Rona, hand on hip now, lit a cigarette, and through its haze, she finally addressed him directly, "I will *not* be dropping into Blues City with you at midnight. *I* have to work."

"Come on, Rona! When I go to Blues City I *am* working."

"Oh, *well!* I wouldn't *dream* of interfering when you're actually doing something constructive. *If* that's what it is . . . ," she said, padding back to the bedroom. "I mean you're not exactly what I would call a reliable informant." She cast a last brief certifying look at her stack of textbooks when suddenly, in an utterly transformed voice, Rona cried out, "Oh my God, it's not Friday tomorrow! Am I hallucinating? They're baking challah downstairs, Joel! I can smell it!"

Joel looked up at her: with her head thrown back, her eyes closed, and her cheeks deeply flushed, it was just this rapturous, abandoned stance that had drawn him to her in the first place. Once, seated around a television set in the crowded student lounge, as President Kennedy stepped off a helicopter on the Eleven O'Clock News, the girl sitting just in front of him had suddenly thrown her head back—the mass of her thick dark waves spilling into Joel's lap—Rona had thrown her head back, and with her eyes closed, cried out, "I can't *believe* we could have such a cute President! I can't *believe* it!"

Gingerly now, he took the lighted cigarette from her uncurled fingers, and whispered, "Alternate side of the street parking suspended tomorrow, Ro. I think it's Shavuos."

"But they bake it with something special, they always do. Some special herb. . . . Some special spice . . . cumin . . . coriander . . . cardamon. *That's* it—cardamon!" she called out ecstatically, and inhaling deeply, she opened her eyes.

"Parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme," Joel foolishly sang back, but then he said, "I'll bring you one, Ro. I'll bring you a challah when I get home."

Click! went Rona's tongue against the roof of her mouth. "Don't be *stupid*, Joel! What bakery is going to be open in the middle of the night?"

"I'll bring you something better," he said, reaching into the deep sleeves of her kimono.

She slid away, but was hiding a half-smile. "I'm holding my breath," she said, and padded off with her textbooks.

Now, almost fifteen years later, from a three-storey mansard-roofed townhouse, with RONA AUSLANDER PH.D. discreetly hung beside the ground-floor entrance, her office door, Rona, on the parlor floor, wrestled from the inside with the heavy French lock, and finally opened the front door.

"Oh, it's you, Joel . . . *mazel tov,*" she squinted into the lowering sun despite her tinted glasses. "Where's Seth? He went in through the back? You *let* him? He *knows* I can't stand it when he does that." Sighing, she draped herself against the massive leaded-glass door, and, fretful, once again peered westward at the offending rays. "*Mazel tov,*" she said. "I hear you bought a new apartment."

"Thanks," Joel nodded. He did not move an inch from the cobblestone-inlaid square of sidewalk, but resting one foot on the bottom step, looked up at her—around her shoulders she had thrown an unfamiliar camel-colored silky jacket, exactly the color her spiteful, blondish mother had always told her a dark-haired girl could never wear—and smiling broadly, he said, "Thanks, Ro. You'd hate it. Guaranteed. It's an *apartment*. In a *building*. All those closed-off people closed in together behind their tiny little windows. It's exactly what you were afraid I would always really *like*." He paused, and then added, "Given my upbringing."

Click! went Rona's tongue against the roof of her mouth. "Don't start in with me, Joel," she said wearily. "There are important things we have to talk about."

"Issues," Joel said. "Isn't that what you mean? *Issues*."

"Yes," Rona nodded, sighing deeply. "Very *important* issues. Which I wish you would at least make an attempt not to trivialize with your attitude."

"Shit, white lady! I don't have no *attitude*!" Joel danced over the cobblestones dribbling an imaginary basketball. "All I have is *hard*"—he skipped a beat, leaping up toward the invisible hoop—"*cash*!"

Rona buried her face in her hands. Sighing very deeply once again, slowly—her body moving with burdened grace—slowly she sat down on the top step, and with her brows knit like a child about to recite, she leaned forward and resolutely began. "Look, I realize that you feel, *precisely*, discriminated against because the bar mitzvah is going to be in my parents' temple. I *understand* that, Joel. And I agree that probably I *was* a little peremptory in the way that decision was just presented to you. I acknowledge it. . . . But *you* have to realize, you have to come to acknowledge"—Rona, fishing in her jacket pocket for cigarettes, had only come up with her lighter and a crumpled, empty pack. "Oh, fuck it!" she suddenly cried, plunging her nails all the way into the tobacco-flecked paper.

Joel said, "I thought you stopped, Ro. I thought Seth told me you were giving it up."

"Oh no you don't, God damn it! You're not going to get away with it *this* time!" Rona screamed, rhythmically slapping her lighter against the steps." There are things here that have to be said *out loud*, Joel! You *cannot* go through your entire life only by hidden agenda!"

"Shh!" Joel raised a cautionary finger and

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pointed down the decorous street. "Please! Dr. Auslander! You don't want the neighbors to think you're some kind of nouveau-riche Jewish divorcee who sits on her front stoop carrying on as if she were still in the boroughs! I mean, me," he gave an outrageous, hunched-over, vaudeville shrug, "me, it wouldn't bother. Me, *takeh*, they wouldn't be so wrong. But you!" Joel took a wide step backward, and theatrically extending his arms like a nightclub crooner, he suddenly belted out, to the tune of *Born Free*:

Born rich!
True, not a Swiss bank-rich
Still only the best so
You'd know which is which!

Born rich!
You know you have *your* niche
And no one can ever
No, not ever, ever—

"Where's the part—what happened to the line where you always had 'delish'?" Rona burst out in a strangled voice. She fumbled for a tissue, and buried her face in her hands.

"Ahh!" Joel said. "Well, you see, Doctor, I've had a hard life. Once, many years ago, I had a beautiful, raven-haired wife. But she threw me out, and ever since that day, my memory hasn't been, my memory hasn't been, my memory hasn't been—"

"Oh, God, Joel! Why can't you just realize that you're not the only one involved in this? It turns out that a bar mitzvah is an *incredibly* complex event. . . . So many people's needs are involved in it. And your parents aren't even—I mean, if at least your mother was still—"

"My parents are both dead and yours are both living in Larchmont, and that's how you made your big *peremptory* decision," Joel said. "I don't see what's complex about it at all. And I don't see why the hell *everything* has to be in Larchmont!"

"Look, Joel," Rona, speaking abruptly, got up from the steps. "I think it's *sweet* that you want to make a party for Seth in the city. I think it's touching. But you are really overloading what is already an extremely *freighted* event." She shook her head, "I don't think you have any idea of what's involved here."

"Of what's involved in a *bar mitzvah*?" Joel stared at her. Finally, he put his hand to his lips, and in a mock-whisper, said, "I know it's a little late to be telling you this, my darling. I guess I just never knew quite how to say it. . . . But the fact is—well, how could you know? The truth is I *had* a bar mitzvah."

"And that's another thing," Rona shook her head as she walked toward the door. "That's a whole other thing that I don't even want to *begin* to get into unless—*until* you read the Jacob Arlow article." She put her hand on the doorknob. "In fact, that's what I'll do right now. I'll get it, I'll give it to you, and then what you *do* with it is your decision."

"This is your top-of-the-charts number on bar-mitzvah trauma?" Joel followed her up the steps. "That's the one?"

RONA, not yet inside, suddenly made a total about-face. Standing stock-still, she spoke very slowly and with an unearthly, borrowed calm. "I did *not* ever say that, Joel. Those are *your* words."

"What's the trouble, sister?" Joel doffed an imaginary hat and tipped it at a rakish angle. "Can't catch my drift?"

"I did *not* ever use the word 'trauma.' *That* word is your choice." She adjusted her glasses, and regally staring past the treetops into the high bow windows on the other side of the street, she continued, "Choices do not *emerge* out of nowhere. Which, of course, you know. . . . Because at the time of your bar mitzvah, your father was in the hospital. He was dying. The rabbi even said a special prayer for him. So that naturally, now, when your *son's* bar mitzvah is approaching, just in terms of—*where* do you think you're going, Joel?" Rona suddenly cried, barring the way. "I did *not* invite you in!"

"What's the matter? Dr. Four-Eyes is in there?"

Click! went Rona's tongue against the roof of her mouth. "His *name* is Malcolm," she said, as she tossed her head to the side. "He does not *happen* to be here at the moment. And just because I initially met him in his professional capacity, rather than in a less formal, more egalitarian set—"

"As I looked into her eyes," Joel began to sing:

I beheld a great surprise.
There was somebody waiting for me-e-e!
There was somebody waiting
There was somebody waiting
There was somebody waiting for me!

He suddenly whirled Rona around in a square-dance do-si-do, and pushed his way inside the door.

"Oh, God! You are just such a child! I don't know how I ever thought you could be a father! I *told* you—*no*. You *cannot* come in."

"Why not?"

"You *know* why not. I *don't* think it's a good idea. It's not fair to Seth. It's confusing."

"Seth won't get confused. He knows I'm his father. Even if he does look like your mother."

Rona stared up into the chandelier. "It is *not* a good idea, Joel. Now especially. For Seth to find us together now, talking about his bar mitzvah, it's just bound to re-evoke his old fantasies of getting his parents back together."

"Oh, *he* had that one, too?" Joel said. "Don't worry, he'll get over it. Granted, it could take him a few years. But you'll see—he'll meet a nice girl, and he'll be fine. I'll talk to him about it, straighten him out. But not till after his bar mitzvah. . . .

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I'd do it now," he added, beaming up at her. "But I *don't* think that would be a good idea."

Rona let out a long, disgusted sigh and walked off down the hallway.

"Where does Dr. Four-Eyes hang out around here? Where does he *sit*?" Joel suddenly called out after her. "I mean to say, which one of the lovely furnishings in your gracious, mortgage-free home does *Malcolm* prefer?"

But Rona, quickly returning with a book clutched in her hand and an unlit cigarette pinched between her lips, was coming toward him with a nearly fevered expression.

"I don't know *how* this could have happened . . . ," she began wildly. She looked away, fumbling with her lighter, and steeling herself, reluctantly said, "The *problem* with giving you this book is that it isn't actually mine. It's Robyn's. . . . I mean, we share all the books that are in the office space, but this is—well, it's—it's really Robyn's personal property."

"That's just one article I'm supposed to read, right?" Joel said. "I'll xerox it. What's the problem?"

"No . . . ," Rona leaned forward miserably, shaking her head. "I don't feel I can *do* that, Joel. This book—well, first of all, it's very old. And secondly—well, this is a very complicated story. . . ." She paused, and with her brows knit, finally said, "This actual book—this *copy*—once belonged to Lily Weisenfreund-Taussig . . . *Lily Weisenfreund-Taussig*, Joel?"

"The *Lieder* singer who performed for Goering? . . . For the whole German General Staff? Wait, wait—only in the Fuehrerbunker itself, but not if Eva Braun—"

"She was a *very* distinguished psychoanalyst. Who was actually *from* Vienna!" Rona shook her head, and sighing, went on, "Well, anyway. . . . She was Robyn's first analyst . . . who *died*. And the way Robyn *got* this book—"

"Say no more," Joel held up his hand, and reaching over to look at it, burst out, "*The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*! Didn't you always have about a *million* of these lying around when you were taking all those courses and seminars?"

"This one is from *1951*—I don't have every single volume! I don't know *anyone* our age who has ev—"

"1951!" Joel took the book from her. "That *is* old! That's even before my trauma—I mean, my bar mitzvah," he said, thumping his head with the book and barking out, "No! No! My *bar mitzvah*, my *bar mitzvah*!"

"God, be *careful*, Joel! I just *explained* to you about that book!" Rona snapped, and her arm shot out in alarm, knocking it to the floor.

JOEL clutched his back, and letting out an old man's muted, cranky cry, moaned, "*Oyy*! My aching bar mitzvah!" as he slowly bent over to pick up the borrowed book. It had hit the floor open at the flyleaf, so that instantly visible beneath the faded markings of a foreign script was a bright, plump, purple calligraphic pennant, ROBYN SABRINA KADISH M.D.

"How *is* Robyn Sabrina these days?" he said. "Studying calligraphy with a scribe from the Middle Ages?"

Rona glared at him. "Well . . . ," she said slowly, lighting her cigarette and squinting from the smoke, "I *don't* recall that you ever genuinely wanted to know. . . . But things were never really all that great with her and Andy. So now there's a lot of stuff that's showing up with the kids."

"What?" Joel said. "Rebecca's running a shooting gallery? The baby's getting beat up by her pimp?"

"The *baby*," Rona furiously began, "The baby —*Abigail*—is almost eight years old. And she is definitely having . . . certain difficulties. And Robyn isn't at all happy with the way the school is handling the whole situation, so she's had to get very involved with *that*. *Plus*, in their building, the co-op board asked her to sit in on interviews for a super, because they've had practically a revolving door there and nothing ever gets fixed. And even when she *told* them that the guy they all really wanted showed marked sociopathic trends, and being able to charm them like that was actually symptomatic, they—"

"Still wouldn't hire her, huh?" Joel interrupted. "I say face it, Rona. How can Robyn be a super? Is her library up to the job? Is it? Look, suppose someone suddenly gets a stopped-up tub and they run down panicked in their bathrobe to Robyn—"

"I don't have to listen to this, Joel," Rona turned away, shrugging. "Robyn is my friend, and I don't—"

"Just a minute here! How is this personal? Ten-C has a stopped-up tub! It's property values —and don't forget that building is a co-op! If 10-C has a real flood up there, what's it going to do to 9-C's ceiling? This is an emergency! Does Robyn put down a beer can and run up with the plunger? Does she? Or does she volume down some flute and harpsichord concerto and look up the literature on water phobia?"

"*That's* why I didn't xerox the Arlow article before!" Rona burst out, her eyes blazing. "*Now* I understand it. Because I *know* your strategies. I *know* your narrow little repertoire of defenses. As soon as something is important, as soon as there's something really serious, you can only make fun of it! Well, not this time, Joel. Not with this article, and not with this issue. I will not let you make a mockery of it."

"For Christ sake, *I'll* xerox the article! First thing tomorrow morning! I'll get the book messengered back to you so fast, Robyn won't even be at work yet! She still won't be finished getting all dressed up to mess around under somebody's sink —I mean, somebody's defenses. She'll never even have to know."

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"Messengered!" Rona cried. "Oh, you would! Captain Success! Master of the empty gesture! . . . I'd much rather xerox it myself and put it in an envelope, but I'm not *unaware* of the way you've set up your office, Joel. Even if I hand-delivered it, you'd never see it."

"What do you mean?" Joel said "I'm so shielded from contact with life by my profit-mad army of flunkeys and minions?"

"Oh my God" Rona's hand suddenly flew up to her mouth. "That's what I was supposed to tell you to call my father about! Something about an early *minyan*."

Joel nodded. "I'll call him. But that's strictly because us Masters of the Empty Gesture are very good at picking up the phone. . . . I'd just like to know how come he doesn't call *me* if there's something he wants to tell me? Until he's got this bar-mitzvah takeover bid locked in, he's not supposed to dial out of Larchmont?"

Click! went Rona's tongue against the roof of her mouth. She said, "*Really*, Joel! Can't you think of anyone else for even one minute? Can't you understand that for my father, dealing with you right now might not be the easiest thing? Don't forget we're talking about a man who's a very old-fashioned—okay, let's say a very *traditional* father here! . . . In this situation, what do you imagine his attitude could be? He's old; he won't really retire so he gets home exhausted—and then, just because he feels like picking up the paper, he has to read about your new marriage? Or your new apartment?"

"I think he should stick to the trades," Joel said. "*Doctor's World*. Or *Allergist's Age*. Whichever one he got that always had skis and golf clubs on the cover. . . ."

Rona suddenly laughed. "Can you *imagine* my father playing golf? Or going skiing?" Her eyes grew distant, and she said, "He did, though, once. . . . It's how he met my mother—there are even pictures of it. . . ."

"He took a photographer with him to document the event?"

Click! went Rona's tongue, but she gave an abstracted shrug and answered without rancor. "It's how they met, that's all. . . . In some ski place in the mountains. My father was still in medical school. And someone around took a couple of pictures." She paused, and taking a deep breath said, "I guess what I'm really saying is, my parents have been married for a thousand years, so all this is—well, it's very hard for them. . . . That *I'm* divorced, that *you're* remarried, that Seth now comes from, quote, a *broken home*. It's really hard for them, Joel. They're very old-fashioned."

"Old-fashioned? Are you kidding? What about me, then? Shit! *I* still believe in the ancient custom where the father has something to do with the son's bar mitzvah."

Rona sighed deeply and shook her head. "I can't go through this with you again, Joel. I can't do it. . . . And anyway, you're only using it to evade a *real* issue—my father does not feel comfortable with you right now. That's *it*. Period. He doesn't. And okay, granted, you can call that a little irrational, but we're talking about his only grandchild here, so what can I possibly tell him? Do I *know* whether there's a room for Seth in your new apartment? Can I *swear* it won't in any way jeopardize Seth's situation in your life now that you have a whole new set of priorities?"

Joel stared at her. "What is the matter with you, Rona? What the fuck is the *matter* with you? How would I go out and buy a huge new apartment without a room for Seth? When did I ever live anywhere that Seth didn't have—"

"You didn't have a new *wife* then, Joel! How am I supposed to know what *her* priorities would be?"

"What's the *difference* what her priorities might be? How would I ever let that affect me? How could you even pretend to think it *could*?" Joel screamed.

RONA had begun filing her nails with an emery board that fell out of her pocket. She frowned intently, and did not look up. Finally, she held out her left hand, and carefully turning and inspecting each finger, she said, "Of course, it's not *every* adoring new husband who could talk about his wife's needs and desires with so much empathy and concern. . . . But that's not my table. I just wanted to get a little clarity on *Seth's* situation in all this."

"Seth does not *have* a situation in all this! He has a *father* in all this! Me!" Joel shouted. "And in Seth's father's new apartment, he will not only have his own *room*—he can practically have his own wing if he wants it!"

"Joel!" Rona suddenly cried out. "Joel, do you remember when Seth was eleven months old and he still couldn't go to solid foods and I was hysterical? And then finally we went to your mother's and she gave him chicken wings from the soup and he loved them so much it was the first food he kept down? My God! She brought him chicken wings from Riverdale every single day for a whole freezing winter! Do you *realize*?" Rona turned around, abruptly pulling off her tinted glasses. "Your mother had to take a bus and two trains each way, and now Seth hardly even knows she existed!"

"Grandma Esther? Are you kidding? He remembers her," Joel said. "Maybe not the chicken wings. But he certainly remembers when she—"

"Joel!" Rona burst out, her unguarded eyes alight with a lofty, fervid glow. "You *have* to talk to Seth about what happened to your family in Europe, what happened during the war."

"*Nothing* happened. . . . They got out in the nick of time, and died in their beds in the Bronx."

"What about your sister?"

Wearily, Joel said, "Fuck off, Rona, would you? You know I didn't know her. To my parents, she

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was real. To me, I never even saw her—to me, she's an abstract person."

"To you *everyone* is an abstract person. That's just a capsule definition of narcissism. Don't you *understand*?" Rona shouted, her head thrown back and her face, even in the fading light, as deeply flushed now as it had once been in desire. "Look, Joel," she said, pulling herself together. "We're not nineteen any more. This is *life*. If you can't deal with your own family's history yourself, then you have to make use of other sources. . . . I think you should take Seth to see *The Sorrow and the Pity*."

"A four-and-a-half hour documentary that's 100-percent subtitles? Are you crazy?"

"When you abdicate you limit your choices," she said stonily. "It's like those parents who feel so threatened by sexuality that they can't discuss it. So, naturally, then they find themselves forced to rely on books or films."

"Or else—the *street*," Joel darkly intoned, rolling his eyebrows in lewd mimicry. "Oh God, the gutter! Filthy, used yellow stars! Torn and diseased deportation orders! . . . Why, oh why can't we just give our young the wholesome, beautiful truth?"

"Bravo, Joel. Bravo," Rona stood up, evenly nodding. "And *I* was the one who provided you with the analogy, Bravissimo! . . . I'd just like to know what you're going to tell Seth at the bar mitzvah—when there'll be *x*-zillion people from *my* family. And from yours, that's *if* they even come, those—those fat, *creepy* second cousins from Hartford. All four of them."

"They were having a sale up there when my mother first came here. You didn't expect her to stop at one, did you? You went to Loehmann's with her a couple of times. *You* know."

"*Enough*," Rona held up her hand like a crossing guard, attempting to mask her features with an exhausted, purifying calm. She leaned over to turn on a lamp, and instantly, in its pale glow, the room was cast into the formal, intimate melancholy of evening. "Look, Joel . . . ," she slowly began. "I wish you could try to believe that in this one area, at least, I am truly on your side. When I think of all the unbearable feelings of loss and deprivation that must often overwhelm you, when I just try to imagine, in the face of all that, your constant struggle to *flourish*, how could I ever say that *I*—"

"Holy shit," Joel called out, as a shadowy flight of laggard pigeons from the rooftops across the street quickly passed before the half-lit windows like suddenly falling snow. "For a second there, I thought it was snowing."

"The blizzard is *inside*, Joel. Why else would it be so hard for you? How can you tell any part of this to Seth when you've never found a way to tell it to yourself? I just want to make sure it doesn't somehow get confused as an issue between you and me. Because how—"

"Rona," Joel said, getting ready to leave, "this is bigger than both of us. But if it turns out that your analogy with sex holds up, I think I pulled off a double play. Because when I first talked to Seth about the baby, right after Polly had the amnio, I explained to him that he was going to have a sister, and that the reason we were planning to name her—"

"*Baby*? What *baby*? What *amnio*?" Rona cried. "What are you *talking* about, Joel? You're not seriously telling me that Polly Treadwell—that *anorexic* Polly Treadwell—is pregnant?"

Joel picked up the borrowed copy of *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, and headed for the door. "We're naming the baby Eve," he called out, as he passed into the drafty hallway. "*You* remember," he threw her a farewell nod. "That's after my abstract sister."

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The Later, and Greater, Strauss

Samuel Lipman

ALL THE material necessary for an evaluation of Richard Strauss (1864-1949) as a composer *sub specie aeternitatis* is now available. The printed scores of the great majority of his works are widely available, most of them elegantly produced by Boosey and Hawkes, the great English publishers. All of his music, with only a few exceptions, has been recorded; even his very last composition, a slight and not very interesting 1948 song called *Malven* ("Mallows"), has been rescued from the estate of the soprano Maria Jeritza and put onto disc.[1]

Much primary material on Strauss, consisting of voluminous sets of fascinating correspondence between the composer and his principal associates, has been published in the original German, with four of the most important items having been made available in English as well.[2] There is an exhaustive account of the Strauss operas by the English music critic William Mann,[3] and there is also a just-published guide, a model of what such things should be, to *Der Rosenkavalier*, the composer's most popular opera.[4] There is even a Marxist study of the composer by the East German critic Ernst Krause.[5] Strauss's early years have received a sympathetic, albeit pedestrian, treatment by the Swiss critic Willi Schuh, the composer's long-time friend and supporter.[6] Most important of all, a comprehensive three-volume description and analysis of Strauss's music, along with a reasonably full picture of his life, by the English conductor Norman Del Mar has just been reprinted by a major American university press.[7] All that is lacking is an exhaustive multivolume study, based on archival research, of the composer's daily life, friends, and family.

As a composer, Richard Strauss was successful in both orchestral music and opera. He first came to public notice as the writer of a mighty series of tone poems, beginning with *Aus Italien* (1886) and *Macbeth* (first version, unperformed, 1886-88), and ending with the gigantic *Eine Alpensinfonie* (1911-15). Though the first two and the last of this string have not enjoyed wide popularity, the intervening works—*Don Juan* (1888), *Tod und Verklärung* (1889), *Till Eulenspiegel* (1895), *Also sprach Zarathustra* (1896), *Don Quixote* (1897), *Ein Heldenleben* (1898), and *Sinfonia Domestica* (1903)—have become repertory staples, glorious clay, as it were, on which every ego-ridden conductor may put his interpretative stamp. And Strauss, of course, was also the composer of fifteen operas, at least three of which are today acknowledged classics of the world repertory.

Strauss's first two operas, *Guntram* (1894) and *Feuersnot* (1901), are conventional romantic works conceived while he was writing the tone poems. They were hardly successful on their appearance, and have failed until now to find a place in the repertory or even to be heard very often. On the other hand, the composer's next operas, *Salome* (1905) and *Elektra* (1908), managed, in their combination of lush post-romanticism with dissonance (most shocking in *Elektra*), to convey an atmosphere of repellent psychopathology to a surprisingly enthusiastic audience. The result was enough to make Strauss, then still in his forties, seem the only living rival to Puccini as a composer for the lyric stage.

From these lurid stories of human degeneration set in antiquity, Strauss turned, in *Der Rosenkavalier* (1910), to 18th-century Vienna and its graceful if racy aristocracy. Gone now, along with the composer's earlier preoccupation with pathological characters, was his use of avant-garde harmonic techniques; in *Der Rosenkavalier*, the music is that of the Viennese waltz and the prevailing atmosphere even suggests on occasion a Strauss named Johann rather than Richard. So successful was this new work that the composer seemed to be transcending his rivalry with the still-living Puccini and to be taking aim at the already mythic Wagner and Verdi.

Though Strauss was to live until four years after the end of World War II, as far as the great musical public was concerned his career as a major composer appeared to have ended with the immense and senti-

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[1] Eva Marton, soprano, with Andrew Davis, piano, CBS IM 42019.

[2] *A Working Friendship: The Correspondence Between Richard Strauss and Hugo von Hofmannsthal*, translated by Hanns Hammelmann and Ewald Osers, Cambridge University Press, 1981; *Richard Strauss and Romain Rolland: Correspondence, Diary, and Essays*, University of California Press, 1968; *A Confidential Matter: The Letters of Richard Strauss and Stefan Zweig, 1931-1935*, translated by Max Knight, University of California Press, 1977; *Gustav Mahler-Richard Strauss: Correspondence, 1888-1911*, edited by Herta Blaukopf and translated by Edmund Jephcott, University of Chicago Press, 1984.

[3] *Richard Strauss: A Critical Study of the Operas*, Oxford University Press, 1964.

[4] *Richard Strauss: Der Rosenkavalier*, by Alan Jefferson, Cambridge University Press, 1985.

[5] *Richard Strauss: The Man and His Work*, Crescendo, 1969.

[6] *Richard Strauss: A Chronicle of the Early Years 1864-1898*, translated by Mary Whittall, Cambridge University Press, 1982.

[7] *Richard Strauss: A Critical Commentary on His Life and Works*, Cornell University Press, Volume I 436 pp., Volume II 452 pp., Volume III 552 pp., $30.00 each hardcover, $12.95 paper.

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mental confection of *Der Rosenkavalier*. From *Der Rosenkavalier* on, each new piece to come from Strauss's pen—and there were many—was subject to the charge that he had lost his way, and was now writing out of effort and habit rather than inspiration.

THE compositions immediately following *Der Rosenkavalier* were almost all operatic, beginning with *Ariadne auf Naxos*, a troubled and conflicted work which was started in 1911 but which did not arrive at the form we know it in today until 1916. The musical score, imaginatively combining a comic opera with a serious one, and written for an orchestra of only 37 players, seemed, by comparison with Strauss's earlier work, both operatic and instrumental, a rarefied form of chamber music. (*Salome* had required 105 players, *Elektra* 111, and *Der Rosenkavalier* 93.)

In this witty and quizzically distanced setting of a story drawn simultaneously from Greek myth, *commedia dell'arte*, and Molière, the composer seemed to have turned his back upon anything, old or new, which a large public might embrace.[8]

It could be said that Strauss's next opera, *Die Frau ohne Schatten* (1918), represented a renewed attempt to write opera on the largest possible scale. The required orchestral forces were once again massive, this time numbering 107; the instrumental textures were thick, as might befit the story of a woman whose inability to cast a shadow could be cured only by giving birth to a child. Whether because of the music or because of the plot, *Die Frau ohne Schatten* was not successful on its premiere in Dresden. It has, however, retained something of a fitful presence in many opera houses, including the Metropolitan.[9]

Strauss's operatic talents now turned to an autobiographical subject, based upon an (unfounded) accusation of infidelity by his adored wife. For *Intermezzo* (1923) he once more, and for the last time in his operas, reduced the orchestra, in this case to 53 players. In another break with the past, and for the first time since *Guntram*, Strauss also wrote his own libretto. Again the audience response, despite an initial interest in the revelations of the composer's personal life, was uncomprehending; accusations of bad taste and lack of musical inventiveness were mingled with sheer boredom.

AS THE decade of the 1920's wore on, Strauss could hardly have avoided the conviction that he was washed up both as a musical hero and, in his newer works, as a commercial success. Indeed, *Intermezzo* did not become available on records until 1980, when a hurried and unclear performance, occasioned by a broadcast with the Bavarian Radio Orchestra under Wolfgang Sawallisch, was released in Europe.[10]

But Strauss continued to compose. For the libretto of *Die ägyptische Helena* (1928), he turned again to Hugo von Hofmannsthal, who had done the honors for *Elektra*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. Yet once again, as with *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, the opera failed to hold the audience. Hofmannsthal's story, after Euripides, of the reconciliation of Menelaus and Helen seemed far-fetched; as for Strauss's musical contribution, it inspired the American critic W.J. Henderson to write: "One hears the voice of an elderly man babbling his reminiscences." Like *Intermezzo*, *Die ägyptische Helena* had to wait for the 1980's to be recorded; it is now available in a flawed and struggling version, based on a set of concert performances, with the Detroit Symphony.[11]

Arabella (1932) was Strauss's next opera and his last with Hofmannsthal, who had died in 1929. This tangled tale of two sisters and their suitors is set, like *Der Rosenkavalier*, in Vienna, but it is distinctly lighter than the earlier opera both in musical conception and in execution. Notwithstanding beautiful and soaring melodic passages, *Arabella* struck many as only a rehash, in the form of operetta, of what had more interestingly gone before. Still, of all Strauss's operas after *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Arabella* is the most popular, and has been recorded several times.[12]

With Hofmannsthal gone, Strauss now turned for a collaborator to Stefan Zweig, the cosmopolitan Austrian writer whose biographical accounts of such diverse figures as Balzac, Dickens, Nietzsche, Casanova, Mary Baker Eddy, Freud, and Erasmus had brought him world fame and a large income. Strauss and Zweig immediately began to work on what was intended to be a comic opera, an adaptation of Ben Jonson's *Epicoene*. The result, *Die schweigsame Frau* (1934), was the story of a cantankerous retired naval officer who hates all noise. In Zweig's hands the plot became immensely complicated, a fact which, when added to Strauss's difficult vocal writing, worked against the opera's acceptance. Extra-musical factors, too, militated against *Die schweigsame Frau*: Zweig was Jewish, and despite Strauss's stature and the fact that he had endorsed the Nazis, such a collaboration was banned. *Die schweigsame Frau* was not available on records until 1979, when it appeared in a valiant and on the whole brilliant performance with the Staatskapelle Dresden, conducted by Marek Janowski.[13]

DEPRIVED of the man whom he had happily considered Hofmannsthal's

[8] Among the many recordings of *Ariadne auf Naxos*, the standard remains the 1954 EMI mono discs conducted by Herbert von Karajan, with Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Irmgard Seefried, and Rita Streich leading a strong cast. They were issued in the United States as Angel 3532 C/L (deleted); they are now available in Europe as EMI 153-03 520/22 M.

[9] *Die Frau ohne Schatten* was first recorded in 1956 for Decca by Karl Böhm and the Vienna Philharmonic, with soprano Leonie Rysanek singing the part of the Empress. The recording, available in the United States as Richmond SRS 64503 (deleted), is still available in Europe as Teldec GOS 574/7 FR, and is superior to the 1963 Joseph Keilberth discs with the Bavarian State Opera, now deleted. A live recording of a 1977 performance by Böhm has recently been issued on Deutsche Grammophon 415 472-IGH3.

[10] EMI (Germany) 1C 165-30 983/85.

[11] London 13135 (deleted), but still available in Europe as Teldec D 176 D 3 GF.

[12] The vibrant 1957 Georg Solti recording with the Vienna Philharmonic, and with the extraordinary soprano Lisa Della Casa in the title role, is still available in Europe as Decca 6.35 104 EK.

[13] EMI (Germany) 1C 165-03 534/36 Q.

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successor, Strauss turned (at Zweig's suggestion and with his continuing assistance) to Joseph Gregor, a theatrical historian with literary aspirations. The first opera to emerge from this collaboration was the one-act *Friedenstag* (1936), in which a commanding officer during the Thirty Years' War decides to continue fighting rather than accept the fact that peace has been declared. This work, a hymn to reconciliation written at a time when Hitler was hastening preparations for war, was performed some 98 times before the beginning of World War II but was then soon dropped from the wartime German repertory. Despite thrilling ensembles for solo voices and chorus, it has rarely been done anywhere since. Significantly, *Friedenstag* has never been recorded, and today even pirated tapes of live performances are difficult to come by.[14]

Strauss's next opera, like *Friedenstag* in one act, was again composed to a text by Gregor. *Daphne* (1937) bears the subtitle "A Bucolic Tragedy" and tells a story, based on Greek mythology, of Daphne's discovery of her love for the mortal Leukippos after the god Apollo has killed him in a fit of jealousy; in remorse, Apollo turns Daphne into a laurel tree, so that her beauty may be preserved for eternity.

This opera, too, despite ecstatic passages for both tenor and soprano voices, remained largely unperformed. To the American critic Paul Henry Lang, in *Daphne* Strauss was "merely drawing on his pension fund, on the musical annuities he had saved up for half a century." For many years, the only recording available of *Daphne* was a partially satisfactory one made at a 1964 concert performance in Vienna;[15] a new and more successful recording with the Bavarian Radio Orchestra under Bernard Haitink has only recently been released.[16]

In the absence of Zweig, Strauss was again forced to rely on Gregor for *Die Liebe der Danae*, his last opera but one; here, however, he was able to begin with a Hofmannsthal sketch dating back to 1919, and the result, in contrast to *Daphne*, was what Strauss called "gay mythology." In *Die Liebe der Danae* the heroine at first loves Midas for his gold, but when his golden touch is taken away by a jealous Zeus, Danae nevertheless stays with him, and they both receive the god's blessing. The opera is a work of immense difficulty for the singers, and scarcely easier for the orchestra. The composer did not live to hear the work performed in public, although he did witness the dress rehearsal for the cancelled premiere in Salzburg in 1944, just as German opera houses were being closed at the order of Joseph Goebbels. When the work was finally done for the first time in public after the war, in Salzburg in 1952, many passages had to be transposed down, a practice also followed on the infrequent occasions it has been produced since then. *Die Liebe der Danae* has seemingly disappeared from the repertories of the world's opera houses; its only recorded appearance is on discs made from a tape of the Salzburg premiere.[17]

STRAUSS's last opera was *Capriccio* (1941). Set in an 18th-century chateau near Paris, it tells of a young and beautiful Countess who is unable to choose romantically between a poet and a musician; in parallel fashion, both she and they are also unable to decide the relative claims of words, music, and the values of the theater in creating an art work. The spokesman for the theater is an engaging figure modeled by Strauss and his librettist, the conductor Clemens Krauss, on Max Reinhardt (to whom Strauss and Hofmannsthal had almost thirty years earlier dedicated *Ariadne auf Naxos*). The opera ends with the Countess, as she accompanies herself on the harp, singing her admirers' joint creation; although she cannot make up her mind, there is the merest suggestion in the closing bars that the composer, at least, has chosen music as the winner.

Unlike Strauss's other operas after *Arabella*, *Capriccio* has won a devoted, though small, following. The audience for this combination of gently affecting music and brilliant talk is made up of those for whom the play of *ideas* in opera is of surpassing interest. This audience is not, however, of a size to make *Capriccio* a part of the repertory anywhere; it has not been staged in New York since 1969, when it was done by the New York City Opera.[18] Fortunately, two recorded versions exist of this remarkable work.[19]

WITH *Capriccio* out of the way, Strauss made clear his intention to write no more operas. But he continued to compose in large forms as well as small. In 1942 he wrote his second Concerto for French Horn, for the second time celebrating the instrument of which his father had been one of the greatest players of the 19th century. In 1943 he wrote an extended Sonatina for 16 wind instruments, a lighthearted piece despite its subtitle, "From the Workshop of an Invalid" (Strauss had had extended bouts of influenza).

In March and April of 1945, just as Nazism was being destroyed on both the Eastern and Western fronts, Strauss wrote the great *Metamorphosen* for 23 solo strings. This work is based on the opening theme of the Funeral March of Beetho-

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[14] The only tape of *Friedenstag* I have been able to locate was made at a staged performance, conducted by Joseph Keilberth, during the 1960 Munich Festival. It features extraordinary singing by the bass Kurt Boehme and the soprano Hildegard Hillebrecht.

[15] Deutsche Grammophon 18 956/57.

[16] Angel DSX-3941.

[17] Educational Media Associates RR-464.

[18] *Capriccio* was, however, performed in New York this past January as part of a Strauss Festival which in March presented *Intermezzo* and will put on *Daphne* this month. But these are all semi-staged performances, done in Carnegie Hall with the singers confined to the very front part of the stage, and the orchestra players massed just behind them. In the case of *Capriccio*, the rudimentary staging hardly compensated for a fully staged performance. Indeed, the opera seems to have suffered the worst of both fates: the singers were too busy acting to concentrate fully on their singing, and the close proximity of the orchestra destroyed the necessary visual illusion and at the same time provided an almost insuperable competition to the vocal parts.

[19] Of these two versions, the 1958 EMI recording conducted by Sawallisch (151-143 524-3 M), with Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Hans Hotter, is superior to the 1972 Böhm discs on Deutsche Grammophon (2709 038 1MS). Both albums are available in Europe.

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ven's *Eroica* symphony; the theme makes its only complete appearance at the end of Strauss's work, and is there marked by him "IN MEMORIAM."[20] In a letter written to Gregor just days before he began the *Metamorphosen,* Strauss had made clear the object of his concern. His thoughts, he wrote, were on the destruction of German civilization (an outcome for which Strauss himself, through his callous and self-absorbed early endorsement of Nazism, bore some responsibility):

> ...I too am in a mood of despair! The Goethehaus, the world's greatest sanctuary, destroyed! My beautiful Dresden—Weimar—Munich, all gone!

But, as always, artistic activity was more important to Strauss than what took place outside the world of his music. Almost immediately, with the outbreak of peace in Europe, he was able to write a second jaunty and even more lengthy wind Sonatina, this time subtitled "Cheerful Workshop" and dedicated to "the spirit of the immortal Mozart at the end of a life full of thankfulness." Like its immediate predecessors, and like the subsequent 1946 Oboe Concerto and the 1947 *Duet Concertino* for clarinet and bassoon, this work astonishes its performers by the marvelous craftsmanship with which it is written and the fecundity of its material.[21] As is the case with almost all of Strauss's late works, the second Sonatina remains little known to the musical public.

The exception, of course, is the *Four Last Songs* (1948). These lush and affecting pieces, written to three poems by Hermann Hesse (1877-1962) and one poem by Joseph von Eichendorff (1788-1857), immediately entered the world repertory on their premiere performance in London in 1950, one year after the composer's death, by the great soprano Kirsten Flagstad and the legendary conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler.[22] For those who felt that Strauss as a great composer had not survived the writing of *Der Rosenkavalier* almost forty years earlier, the *Four Last Songs* seemed a reversion to the rich and cushioned musical world not just of that opera but of the tone poems themselves. Indeed, there was solid evidence for the perception that in the composer's end could be found his beginning: at the close of *Im Abendrot* ("In Evening's Glow"), usually given in performance as the last of the four songs, Strauss actually quoted the final theme from *Tod und Verklärung.*

IN TRYING to understand the verdict which has been passed on the later music of Richard Strauss, it is necessary to distinguish between two sources of negative assessment. The first source is the intellectual world, which on both literary and musical grounds has judged Strauss to be a reactionary force. The second is the wider musical public, which has found the works of Strauss's maturity difficult to become involved in and difficult to understand.

The harsh literary verdict no doubt rests on the composer's choice of subject matter for his stage works. After *Der Rosenkavalier,* all of Strauss's operatic subjects are in some sense bourgeois, in that they deal not with social dissolution—as do *Salome* and *Elektra*—but with social resolution. Indeed, Strauss's turn to middle-class morality is presaged in *Der Rosenkavalier*: even though that opera opens with an explicit portrayal of a liaison between a teenaged boy (played, it must be remembered, by a woman) and a much older woman, it ends with a fairy-tale (and harmonically most conventional) duet between the boy and the new-found young girl he intends to marry.

Ariadne auf Naxos, the opera immediately following *Der Rosenkavalier,* adds an old-fashioned and sentimental tale of a heroine's fidelity in love to its neoclassical reliance on earlier operatic and literary models. *Die Frau ohne Schatten* is concerned with human fulfillment achieved through childbearing. *Intermezzo* (subtitled by the composer, "A Bourgeois Comedy") deals not with a true but a false charge of infidelity. *Die ägyptische Helena* closes with the reconciliation of Menelaus and Helen, not their tearing asunder. *Arabella,* though not without its picaresque aspects, is based on the heroine's finally successful search for the one "right man." *Die schweigsame Frau* ends with the cantankerous old man blessing the handsome young couple, deeply in love, who have been tormenting him. *Friedenstag,* celebrating the virtues of peace, is sympathetic as well to the virtues of military courage and the willingness to follow orders even unto death. *Daphne* is about a once cold and unfeeling woman's perpetual witness to her great love. *Die Liebe der Danae* is about the relinquishment of avarice and its replacement by true love. And *Capriccio* combines its witty discussion of the nature of opera, an upper-class art form, with an adoring treatment of the romantic attachments of a beautiful young aristocrat. It would be hard to conceive a list of subjects more culpable than these in the eyes of an ideologically committed modernist critic.

A related, and perhaps even more damning, charge against the later Strauss comes from musical intellectuals. Since all the harmonies Strauss uses are ultimately reducible to consonant chords, he has been taxed with having turned his

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[20] Herbert von Karajan has made a specialty of *Metamorphosen,* recording it both early and late in his career. His first recording of the work, done with the Vienna Philharmonic in 1947, remains of more than historical interest; it is still available in Europe as EMI 1C 137-54 370/73.

[21] A mellifluous recording of the first Sonatina was made in the late 1950's by excellent players from the Boston Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Eric Simon; it was available as number 406 on the long-disappeared Boston label. The second Sonatina may now be found, in a spotty live performance by soloists from the Munich Philharmonic, as Calig CAL 30 820. The works for horn, oboe, and clarinet and bassoon were available in a complete set of Strauss instrumental concertos, with Rudolf Kempe conducting the Staatskapelle Dresden, on EMI 191-0274/46 (no longer listed). An excellent performance of the *Duet Concertino* by the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra under Gerard Schwarz is available on Nonesuch D-79018.

[22] The *Four Last Songs* have been recorded by many of the greatest sopranos of the past four decades. The world-premiere performance with Flagstad and Furtwängler is now available on Turnabout 34830. The classic version, still available on Angel 38266, is that of Schwarzkopf under the baton of Otto Ackermann. My own favorite, also done in the 1950's, is by Della Casa and Böhm; it was last available here on London 23215.

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back on the progressive developments associated with Arnold Schoenberg and Igor Stravinsky which burst forth in Europe just before World War I. These developments, most easily perceived in the form of extreme and unresolved dissonances, are the most readily identifiable signs of modernism in music.

Thus, according to the double verdict of the intellectual world, the conventionality of Strauss's subjects was all too well matched by the backwardness of his harmonic vocabulary: in a nutshell, Strauss was a traitor to the new. Nor did it help matters that Strauss was so prolific, and so facile, a composer. How could anyone with anything musically profound to say have managed to say it so easily, and to keep saying it repeatedly and at such length?

IF THE intellectual reaction to the later Strauss has been hostile, that of the musical public has been bewildered. Part of this bewilderment has again been due, although on very different grounds, to Strauss's choice of operatic subjects. With the partial exception of *Arabella*, these subjects and their treatment have often seemed to lack what might be called the theatrical common touch. Isolated passages aside —Ariadne's great aria in which she greets death, Helen's aria at the beginning of Act II of *Die ägyptische Helena*, the transformation scene at the end of *Daphne*, the Countess's closing scene in *Capriccio*, to mention only the obvious examples—the later operas of Strauss do not speak immediately to the audience. For this failure to provide emotional gratification of the kind offered by the earliest Strauss of the tone poems, and by the middle-period Strauss of *Salome*, *Elektra*, and *Der Rosenkavalier*, and by the Strauss of the *Four Last Songs*, they have paid a heavy price.

In *Ariadne* the use of classical mythology and the *commedia dell'arte* as a framework for the action creates a distance which requires thought, intelligence, and previous musical experience to bridge; the same can be said of Strauss's reliance in this work on the archaic styles of *opera buffa* and *opera seria*. In *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, Strauss's somehow "cool" music, along with Hofmannsthal's use of involved symbolism, requires a similar effort from the audience. In *Intermezzo*, the rapid dialogue so suitable to the representation of a family squabble demands close attention in order to be understood. In *Die ägyptische Helena*, as in *Daphne* and in *Die Liebe der Danae*, there is an atmosphere of restraint even in the most excited musical passages, as if the refinement of the mythical subject matter called forth an equal refinement in the composer. Even in *Arabella* and *Capriccio*, relatively approachable (and moderately popular) as they are, it is difficult to escape the impression that Strauss has eschewed an easy rapport with the audience and has instead chosen to express his own pleasure in the manipulation and transformation of his material.

Strauss's public, very much in his corner for his earlier works, has hardly been insensible to the craftsmanship with which his later works are written, or to the way he filled his manuscript paper with beautiful notes. But craftsmanship, in the absence of the grand emotional sweep of Strauss's earlier works, has not compelled love.

THESE, then, are the grounds on which both intellectuals and the wide musical public have judged Richard Strauss to be a composer whose last four or so decades were wasted or even represented a betrayal. But the judgment has one basic flaw. It devalues, when it does not ignore, an enormous body of music of the highest artistic quality —music which has the intrinsic power to fascinate, charm, and move.

The first characteristic of his music which must be considered is its unparalleled suppleness of harmony. For many other composers, World War I, a time which saw the general breakup of European culture, marked the end of the utility of traditional harmony. Schoenberg, in emancipating dissonance through the introduction of his twelve-tone system, thought he would thereby guarantee the future of German music. Others, like Stravinsky and Bartók, even if they did not totally reject tonality itself, sought salvation by severing their music from the lushness associated with romanticism. But Strauss continued to work within the vocabulary of *fin-de-siècle* harmony. Instead of turning his back on the cushioned sounds of Wagner and of his own youth, Strauss found ways to thin down these sounds and to use them with extraordinary flexibility and imagination, so that while his harmonies are never shocking, they are also never predictable.

The flowing progressions of the Bacchus-Ariadne duet at the end of *Ariadne auf Naxos*; the broad E-flat major expanses of Apollo's declaration of his power as sun god in *Daphne*; and the easy naturalness of the endless modulations in the string sextet Introduction to *Capriccio*—to cite only three examples—testify to a mastery of the harmony of the last century so audacious in its freedom that it could only have been accomplished well into our own. It must be said, too, that Strauss's palette encompasses harmonies of Beethovenian sturdiness, most markedly in the military section of *Friedenstag*, in addition to those of his more accustomed late-romantic sensuality.

But there is more in these works than harmony: there is an abundance of melody. Strauss, ever clear-headed in musical matters, had down-to-earth ideas about his own capacity in this area. Stefan Zweig, in his memoir, *The World of Yesterday*, quotes Strauss as writing:

> I am not one to compose long melodies as did Mozart. I can't get beyond short themes. But what I can do, is to utilize such a theme, paraphrase it and extract everything that is in it, and I don't think there's anybody today who can match me at that.

Though the composer may have done himself less than justice here —each of his later operas has many passages of long-lined melody— there can be little doubt that he was a genius at the use of melodic fragments of varying length. Much of *Daphne*, including its end, is built out of a short, unharmonized G-major motif; similarly a tiny four-note trill forms the opening and

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much of the foundation for the Oboe Concerto. So rich are all these motives in non-repetitive musical continuations that the listener's impression is not in the least of short-windedness but rather its opposite, an almost breathless and infinitely varied continuity.

Closely related to Strauss's harmonic mastery and his melodic fertility is the density with which he piles ideas one after and indeed on top of the other. Perhaps the most remarkable example of this embarrassment of musical riches is to be found in *Die schweigsame Frau*. Here, even when familiar motives are used, the listener's impression is that the composer has not once repeated himself. The total effect of the polyphonic layering of orchestral parts, usually almost hidden underneath the rapidly moving vocal lines, and of the extravagantly complex ensembles with which the work abounds, is of an endless, natural music-making.

Taken together, these virtues in Strauss's later music, so marvelous one by one, have a paradoxical effect. So intricately are his harmonies varied, so little does he seem to repeat his inexhaustible musical material, so densely does he pack the music with his inventions, that the listener (no less than the performer) has little to hang on to. Orthodox 19th-century musical structure, with its regular, predictable, and unaltered recurrence of long melodic passages, helped the listener to recognize, and even remember, what was going on. In Strauss the material is not so much recurrent as developing; at every moment the musical expression is always in some sense completely new, and only by knowing the work very well indeed can one recognize at each moment just how much of what one is hearing has its roots in what has gone before.

STILL, after all their virtues have been acknowledged, the question remains of how these later works of Strauss stack up against their more famous predecessors. Clearly, the famous tone poems and the operas *Salome*, *Elektra*, and *Der Rosenkavalier* are attractive to a large audience in a way that the works following them never have been; clearly, too, this attractiveness is based upon an outwardness of emotion and a largeness of scale which mark them as the most successful products of musical late romanticism. But these very qualities are also, and necessarily, accompanied by a certain coarseness of tone and manner. On more refined musical and aesthetic grounds, the claims of the later Strauss to precedence are strong indeed, for in these works the composer's creative attentions are at last focused inward on art itself, rather than on the audience he had been so assiduously cultivating before.

Contrary, then, to the modernist myth that Richard Strauss was a traitor to the new, it is plain that the problem with his later works does not lie in their familiarity and simplicity, but rather in their unfamiliarity and difficulty. What the final public fate of these Strauss masterworks will be cannot now be predicted. It is clear, however, that in these works his achievement in musical creativity and subtle emotional power comes as close to perfection as anything our waning century will be likely to have engendered. That this achievement, so important to the future of musical composition, is so little known tells us more about the quality of our artistic life, and what we bring —or do not bring—to that life, than we would perhaps like to hear.

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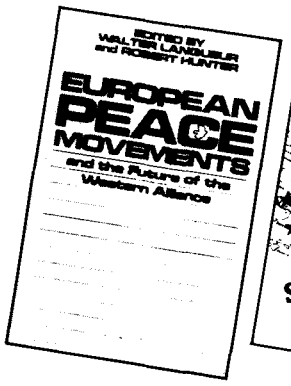

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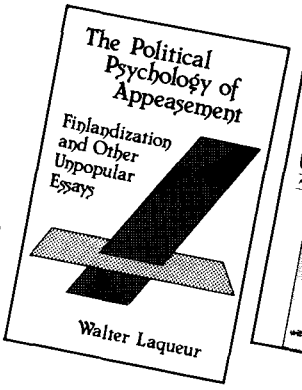

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Fighting the Sandinistas

WITH THE CONTRAS: A REPORTER IN THE WILDS OF NICARAGUA. By CHRISTOPHER DICKEY. *Simon and Schuster. 327 pp. $18.95.*

Reviewed by PENN KEMBLE

CHRISTOPHER DICKEY'S book about the *contras* is a blood-flecked account of how in his view U.S. policy in Nicaragua has gone from debacle to depravity: from fumbling efforts to contain the anti-Somoza revolution to support for a brutal and futile anti-Communist insurgency. It centers on the story of Commander Suicide, a former Somoza National Guardsman, and his anti-Sandinista band: how they lived, loved, killed, and finally themselves were killed in the dingy barrooms and rugged mountains of the Nicaragua-Honduras border. There is, not surprisingly, a moral: the involvement of the United States in Nicaragua has had a devastating effect on everyone and everything we have touched.

There are fragments of Dickey's tale that make a good read: vignettes of skullduggery and civil war that could be adapted for a television mini-series. The late Anastasio Somoza makes a cameo appearance, and Dickey remarks "there was always something reminiscent of pulp-fiction melodrama in the dictator's voice." So it is with his own book.

Pulp-fiction melodrama can be harmless fun, but this book is not harmless fun. The truth is that the Nicaraguan resistance has not fallen deeper and deeper into barbarism, as Dickey implies. Quite the opposite: in recent years, this movement has gained both strength and moral stature. Yet there is not the least hint of such a development, or even the possibility of such a thing, in this account. And because Dickey's portrayal becomes an unrelieved montony of evil, his book ultimately fails, even as a good read.

Dickey begins his story in a Miami bar, where a stunned and disillusioned veteran of the *contra* struggle is philosophizing about those "men who learn to kill and who love it." He is talking about Suicide, Krill, Cancer, Echo, Joshua, and others—the *noms de guerre* of guerrillas of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN), the largest of the anti-Sandinista guerrilla groups.

These people, Dickey's various informants testify, maraud through Nicaragua shooting at trucks and buses, killing coffee pickers, and kidnapping, torturing, and murdering civilians. Eventually, their orgies of violence so derange them that they turn upon one another, creating such embarrassment that their U.S. patrons must do away with them—thereby starting a new and wider cycle of violence. At the end of the book, the *contra* veteran who began the tale reappears to observe that it might really be a wiser thing to come to terms with the Sandinistas. "There is no truth or reality around you," he muses. "Or reality is irrelevant. . . ."

As it turns out, Dickey's chastened veteran and the key source for much of the book is Edgar Chamorro, a former Jesuit priest, one-time member of Somoza's diplomatic service, and for several years a director of the FDN. Since providing inspiration for Dickey, Chamorro has more than come to terms with the Sandinistas. In a letter to the New York *Times* last January 9, he praised the Sandinistas for the "enormous advances in education, housing, and health care" they have made since the revolution, and declared effusively that "the Sandinistas must be credited with generating an atmosphere of equality for the first time in Nicaragua's history." (One might suppose that Daniel Ortega was in New York buying $3,500 worth of designer eyeglasses for some hard-working Nicaraguan cane cutters.)

Chamorro's account of the history of the FDN has figured significantly in the debate over U.S. aid to the Nicaraguan insurgents, and Dickey's book is only its most extensive elaboration. To be sure, Dickey himself spent six days "with the *contras*" inside Nicaragua, and reported on Central American affairs for three years for the Washington *Post*. Neither he nor Chamorro can be accused of ignorance of his subject. But one way to describe their version of history might be to say that where it conflicts with political ideology, reality indeed becomes irrelevant.

A SERIOUS history of the Nicaraguan resistance will probably be a long time in coming. But some elements of the real story stand out in sharp contrast to the rendition offered by Dickey and Chamorro.

The most striking of these is that the episode of indiscipline and violence which is the centerpiece of this book was punished by the FDN itself. Four of the ringleaders, including Commander Suicide, were courtmartialed and executed. There is no evidence that their punishment has brought a wider contagion of violence: by most accounts, the *contra* forces, especially those which operate in northern Nicaragua, are today more disciplined and discriminating about their targets than was the case a few years back.

Another is that the *contra* forces, instead of exhausting themselves in pointless violence, have continued to grow. Not only are they larger, but the character of the movement is changing. Former members of Somoza's *Guardia* no longer are the defining core of the resistance; they are gradually being supplanted by young commanders risen from the ranks, by former Sandinista fighters disillusioned by the Communist "revolution within the revolution," by democratic nationalists drawn out of exile by a growing conviction that Nicaragua can be rescued.

This transformation has been

PENN KEMBLE *is a founder and member of the executive committee of the Friends of the Democratic Center in Central America (PRODEMCA), a nonpartisan citizens' group that supports democratic development in Central America.*

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noted by many commentators, including some from the liberal Left. Edward R.F. Sheehan, writing in the Boston *Globe* last February 19, told how "I arrived in Central America with the conventional wisdom that the *contras*, through their past links to the Argentine colonels and the CIA, and with so many ex-Somocistas as their commanders, were a reactionary right-wing force. After nearly a week with them, I modified this preconception. . . . I consider the military *contras* an authentic national-liberation force." Robert Leiken, a senior associate of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and for many years a critic of U.S. policy in Central America, testified on March 4 before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the insurgents "are not a triumphalist army on the outskirts of Managua, but they are also no longer mercenaries striking from border sanctuaries. Their movement now rests on a popular rebellion, with new field commanders, more responsive to pressure, both from within and without."

DICKEY himself apparently sensed a change taking place in the movement even during his own brief travels into Nicaragua with the *contra* forces in the spring of 1983. In a detailed report in the Washington *Post* on April 3 of that year, he acknowledged that

> the troops showed high morale and appeared to be fighting voluntarily, often marching from dawn until nightfall through various terrains, eating little more than a few chunks of beef or sugar cane.
>
> Again and again when peasants were asked why they were offering the *contras* food, sometimes bringing it unbidden to the mountaintops for them, why they offered them shelter, why they told them where Sandinista troops were moving and ambushes laid or why they had joined the rebel army, they said nothing about fear. Instead they talked in terms of what they view as Sandinista threats to their economic, social, and cultural survival.

But the spirit of popular rebellion that Dickey conveyed so clearly in his earlier newspaper accounts has been suppressed in his more recent book—even though the *contras* have grown since then, even though their discipline has improved, and even though their leadership has been broadened to include men of the democratic Left like Alfonso Robelo and Arturo Cruz. What *With the Contras* provides is a rewrite tailored to the political interests of liberal isolationism and defeatism.

The design of the book is made complete by its steadfast unwillingness to blame the Sandinistas squarely for their part in provoking Nicaragua's civil war. Dickey's account of the course of the Nicaraguan revolution moves virtually in one leap from the fall of Somoza in July 1979 to the beginnings of U.S. support for anti-Sandinista activities in 1981. More than a year is missing—the period in which Carter-administration liberals tried

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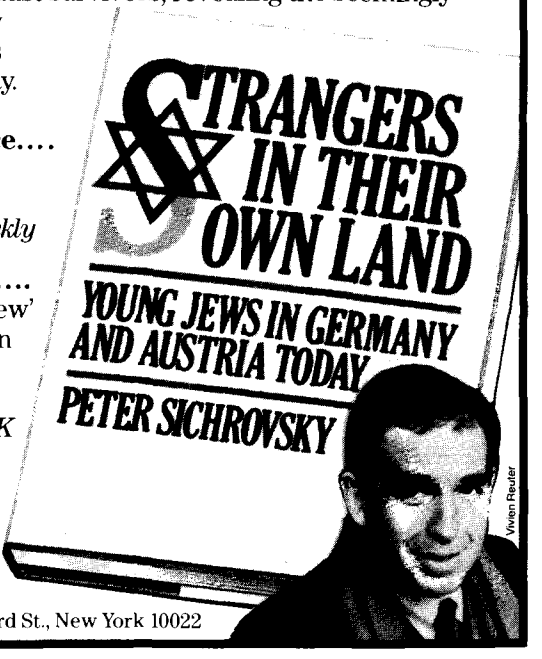

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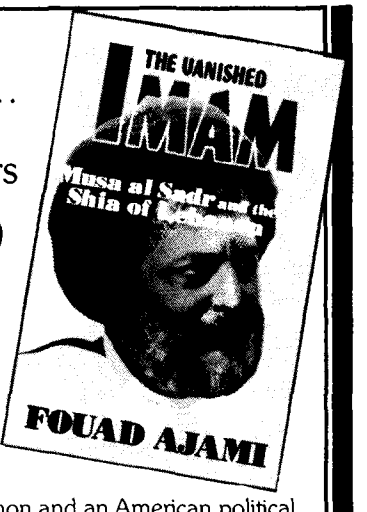

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frantically to curry favor with Nicaragua's new revolutionary government (and in fact increased U.S. economic aid to Managua five times over the amount given annually to the Somoza government), only to watch helplessly as the Sandinistas turned of their own volition toward Cuba and the Soviet Union. That story is not only a story of the Sandinistas' betrayal of the Carter administration; it is the story of the betrayal of their own people—and especially of their pledge of free and prompt elections.

"With the war against the *contras* as a reason and a pretext, the Sandinistas moved steadily into the Soviet orbit with only the occasional pause along the way to test the possibilities of conciliation with Washington and find them, always, wanting," Dickey writes. Then, remarkably, he continues: "They held elections; Washington declared them invalid."

If what the Sandinista government held in November 1984 can be called elections, then Ferdinand Marcos deserves to be president of the Honest Ballot Association. The press was censored, freedom of assembly was rigidly restricted, and, most importantly, violent mobs were set upon the leading opposition candidate, Arturo Cruz. Even Carlos Andrés Pérez, the former president of Venezuela and one of the Sandinistas' most willing Latin American defenders, refused to attend the inauguration of Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega. The manner of his "election," Pérez explained, was just too disgraceful.

THE two years between the fall of Somoza and the beginnings of U.S. involvement with the *contras* in mid-1982 were crucial years not only for what they demonstrated about the Sandinistas' pro-Communist intentions, but also because those were the years in which the roots of the Nicaraguan resistance were set down. It is this history that, whatever the shortcomings of the FDN, makes it today an authentic Nicaraguan nationalist movement, and accounts for the stubbornness its leaders have sometimes shown in the face of U.S. pressures. Yet today even many of those who

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sympathize with the idea of an anti-Sandinista insurgency are unwilling to grant the FDN a measure of legitimacy.

The true story of the rise of the Nicaraguan resistance would not only include a more fair-minded account of Sandinista treachery and repression, it would also include a more generous account of the efforts of the men who came together after the triumph of the Sandinistas to work to regain their country. These men—Enrique Bermúdez, Aristedes Sanchez, Adolfo Calero—may not be saints, and it may be that the movement they lead will someday outgrow their leadership, but when one considers the circumstances in which they came together—the disintegration of all social order, the need to tame bands of dangerous and despairing men, the threat posed by the long reach of the Soviet system, and the squeamish disdain they encountered from the United States—it is impossible to deny them an element of heroism. We can judge their work by its fruits. Today the Nicaraguan resistance, of which the FDN is the main component, has grown, and increasingly reflects the spirit and values of Western democracy. Its Sandinista opponents are meanwhile moving steadily in the direction of totalitarianism.

In early 1983 Joan Didion published a book about El Salvador in which she declared that country too dark and degenerate for any remedy the United States might help provide. Miss Didion has written an enthusiastic blurb for the jacket of Dickey's book. Yet today El Salvador has an elected government and its citizens increasingly enjoy the rights of free people. Civil violence has abated—and that which from time to time recurs can increasingly be ascribed to a war by intransigent Marxist guerrillas against the prospect of democracy. So the counsel of despair has moved to a new venue: Nicaragua.

Yet even though Christopher Dickey is a fervent and sometimes tendentious pessimist, something encouraging comes through in *With the Contras,* despite his best efforts. He shows us many brave, tough people in the mountains of Central America who are willing to fight

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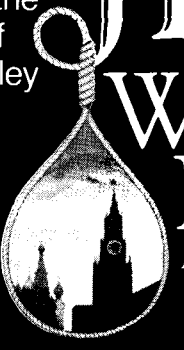

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Cause Célèbre

THE AFFAIR: THE CASE OF ALFRED DREYFUS. By JEAN-DENIS BREDIN. Translated by JEFFREY MEHLMAN. *Braziller. 628 pp. $24.95.*

Reviewed by SCOTT MCCONNELL

BEFORE Captain Alfred Dreyfus was charged with high treason in 1894, he was a thirty-four-year-old, career-conscious officer on the French army general staff. Like others from the Alsatian bourgeoisie whose families had chosen French citizenship and exile after the German annexation of their province, he was a passionate French patriot. His superior officers described him as "conscientious." He had been diligent enough in his work to win an envied position in the army, despite having finished below the middle of his class at the Polytechnique. Married, the father of two, financially comfortable—by nearly any measure, Dreyfus was pointed toward a life of the most conventional respectability. Although he was hardly religious, Dreyfus was also a Jew. This circumstance would turn out to be more decisive in shaping his life than any choice made by him alone.

The affair which grew out of the Dreyfus case began as a curious 19th-century courtroom drama, but was eventually transformed into an epochal event that foreshadowed a great many of the tragic tendencies in the next century. The affair brought to the center stage of French politics a fateful alliance between Catholic anti-Semitism and the anti-bourgeois, anti-democratic mob—a French advance screening of the shock troops of 20th-century fascism. The mob did not prevail, but the question of Captain Dreyfus's guilt or innocence did emerge as the lodestar of political belief for an entire generation.

This was true across the political spectrum. A man like Léon Blum—who at the time of Dreyfus's arrest was just starting out as a young lawyer and literary critic—owed his entry into politics to the passions aroused by the Dreyfus case; he would lead the Socialist party for thirty years. On the other side, a figure like Charles Maurras, the royalist essayist and anti-Dreyfus agitator, would never forget the affair; fifty years after Dreyfus's arrest, the founder of the *Action Française* would exclaim that his own conviction on the charge of collaboration with the Nazi occupation was "the revenge of Dreyfus."

Nearly a thousand titles have been devoted to the Dreyfus case, but it is unlikely that anyone will surpass this new synthesis by the prominent French lawyer and part-time historian Jean-Denis Bredin. The Dreyfus affair brings together a mass of tangled legal details resting at the center of one of the great political divides in French history; Bredin has mastered both the legal and the political aspects, and is outstandingly successful at presenting all the elements of the courtroom contest clearly and vividly.

THE affair began when French intelligence found the now-famous *bordereau,* a letter containing French military secrets, in the wastebasket of the German military attaché in Paris. The handwriting bore a loose resemblance to that of Dreyfus—who happened to be the only Jewish officer attached to the general staff. Handwriting experts were rounded up to testify that Dreyfus was the document's author. Details of the investigation were leaked to mass-circulation anti-Semitic newspapers. At the subsequent trial, which was marked by irregularities, Dreyfus, to the surprise of practically no one except himself and his family, was con-

SCOTT MCCONNELL *is a program officer with the Twentieth Century Fund. He contributed "Homage to Raymond Aron" to our May 1984 issue.*

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victed of treason and transported in chains to Devil's Island, a barren atoll in the South Atlantic, to serve a life sentence that was likely (given the conditions on the island) to be of short duration.

Two years later it was discovered that military secrets were still being passed to the German embassy, and in handwriting closely matching that of the original *bordereau*. Investigation showed the handwriting to be that of Major Walsin Esterhazy, an adventurer of murky royal lineage. The general staff was thus faced with a choice: admitting a judicial error or covering up the earlier miscarriage of justice by seeding the file with forgeries. Such was the prevailing sentiment about the Jew who had served on the general staff that the relevant officers chose the latter course without hesitation. Were it not for the rectitude of a single man, Colonel Georges Picquart, the Dreyfus affair would have ended right there.

But through the combined effort of Picquart, of Dreyfus's brother Mathieu, and of the young essayist Bernard Lazare, the circle of people convinced of Dreyfus's innocence began to expand with each passing month. Late in 1897 the prominent Radical politician Georges Clemenceau and then the novelist Émile Zola joined the ranks of those pressing for a new trial. The next year, the conspiracy of the general staff unraveled completely following the confession and suicide of Captain Henry, the army's principal forger. Dreyfus was brought back from Devil's Island for a retrial in military court, which, amazingly, still did not result in acquittal. He was pardoned by the Prime Minister, and retired to live with his family, greatly aged by his ordeal. It was not until 1906, when Clemenceau became Prime Minister, that a court of appeal cleared Dreyfus of all charges.

None of these procedures, however, settled the matter in the hearts of the French, and Dreyfusism remained a fighting word well into the next century. When Dreyfus was shot at and wounded in the street in 1908, his assailant was acquitted by a Paris court that claimed to "dissent" from the judg-

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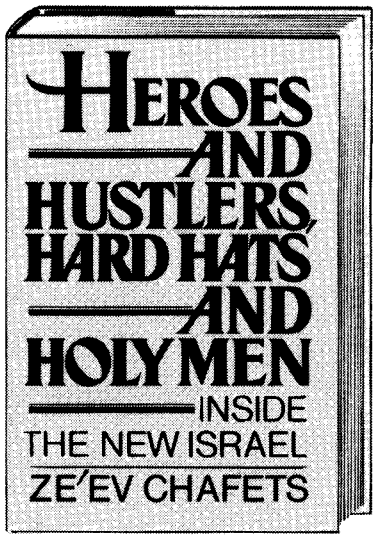

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earlier; as late as the 1930's a play based on the affair could not be performed in Paris without harassment by right-wing toughs from the *Action Française*.

WHAT made the case into a *cause célèbre* was the stridency of the voices and actions outside the court. From the very beginning a steady background chorus of anti-Semitic invective issued from Édouard Drumont's paper, *La Libre Parole*. Such violent and menacing language was on the upsurge in many parts of Europe; in France, Dreyfus gave it a focus. The anti-Semites combined with other foes of the Third Republic in the press, the Catholic Church, and the army. These groups had urban mobs to do their bidding. In 1897, following violent attacks against Jews in French Algeria, there were rampages against synagogues and Jewish-owned businesses in towns throughout France. Those alive today who remember the affair recall an atmosphere of tremendous intensity, and physical danger.

Bredin recounts all this, but ties it into the history of the affair with considerable, perhaps excessive, caution. He does not believe, for instance, that Dreyfus was framed from the outset. His interpretation of the original arrest roughly matches the reaction of upper-class French Jews of the period: the whole thing (in the acerbic paraphrase of Hannah Arendt) was an unfortunate judicial error, the victim of which just happened to be Jewish. But Bredin also leaves no doubt that the climate of anti-Semitism was responsible for Dreyfus's being held as a guilty man long after evidence to the contrary was freely available.

Dreyfus himself never seemed to be aware of this ugly side of France, and certainly never managed to find words to respond to it. Still, Bredin's portrait of his unlikely hero is more sympathetic than that of many contemporaries. The accused captain's repetitious avowals of devotion to France and its army—delivered in his unfortunate wooden voice—made him the despair of his supporters during his trials and after; some of these would eventually find the former prisoner un-

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worthy of the fine words they had expended on his behalf. Bredin's view is more nuanced and complete; he presents Dreyfus's ordinary loyalties against the painfully vivid backdrop of the suffering to which he was subjected. What emerges is a man of uncommon fealty, with a sort of pure and mute patriotism all the more extraordinary because it was the last sentiment that anyone desired from him.

IN ONE of his most provocative chapters Bredin argues that one of the Dreyfus affair's most significant legacies was the unprecedented and nearly complete political engagement it produced among French intellectuals, who defined the issues in the broadest possible terms and so set an agenda of long-lasting ideological division. The first great salvo was Émile Zola's article "*J'accuse*," which was published in a special edition of Clemenceau's daily newspaper. Zola lashed out at the army for railroading Dreyfus and stirring up base hatreds to cover up its own crime. This polemic by the renowned novelist forced the whole French literary community to take a stand: what followed, besides fresh outbreaks of street violence against Jews, was a battle of petitions, manifestoes, articles in the popular press, and lobbying of politicians.

The Dreyfusards took the lead in all this. The anti-Dreyfusards, inspired at first to mockery, adopted the then-obscure word "intellectual" to deride those who had putatively as little insight into an espionage case as a police colonel would have into the origins of romanticism. But the term was soon clasped as a badge of honor by the young men who spent the last years of the 1890's writing and organizing for Dreyfus. The cause drew in already famous figures like Émile Durkheim and Anatole France and young men like Elie Halévy, Julien Benda, Charles Péguy, Léon Blum, and countless others--a large part of the roster of those who would later make their names as intellectuals in politics.

The writers who opposed Dreyfus also organized—though their sense of righteousness grew deficient as the specific case against Dreyfus came to look thinner and thinner. Intellectual anti-Dreyfusism rested on some principles more substantial than anti-Semitism; there was disgust as well at the spectacle of the French army exposed and denigrated. Even if Dreyfus were innocent the Dreyfusards were guilty, exclaimed Maurice Barrès: it was, he said, profoundly dangerous to treat the French nation, and the symbols which provoked allegiance to it, as simply a retrograde prejudice to be destroyed in the name of progress.

But the French nation managed to survive Dreyfus's exoneration, and indeed was all the stronger for it. By the end of the affair the royalist and clericalist opponents of the Third Republic were weakened, even discredited. Dreyfusism infused the centrist parties that supported the Republic with a new sense of purpose.

Of even greater significance was the transformation the affair pro-

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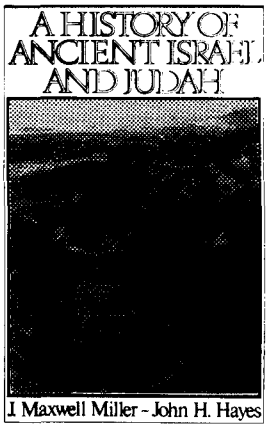

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duced in French socialism. There had been a tradition of anti-Semitism in the French workers' movement, which found Jews a convenient symbol of bourgeois capitalism. Jean Jaurès, the movement's principal leader, early on dismissed the Dreyfus controversy as concerning only competing factions of the ruling class. When Jaurès, with his extraordinary eloquence, rallied to the Dreyfusard side, he was in effect acknowledging that French socialism had a stake in making right an injustice committed against a single individual of bourgeois origin. This was a giant step in the movement's uneven march toward the reformist mainstream of French politics, and left an attractive, long-lasting mark on the political style of Jaurès's party.

IT IS very much to Bredin's credit that he treads carefully around the subject of the "two Frances" which, it has often been said, were brought into sharp focus by the Dreyfus affair. The case is ready ammunition for a theme long commonplace in France: that there is a marked, eternal divide between the parties of progress and reaction, liberty and hierarchy, between laicism and the Church, the individual and the state, the Left and the Right. This notion of a divide dates back to the French Revolution; like many shibboleths, it is based on more than a grain of truth. But history since the Dreyfus affair has blurred the dividing line beyond easy recognition.

The emergence, in 1917, of a new phenomenon on the world scene—in which a single political party claimed to embody the state, the law, and the forward march of history—was the death knell of the coalition braided together by the Dreyfusards. André Malraux once observed of France's Left-leaning intellectuals of the 1930's that although they may have thought they were perpetuating the spirit of the Dreyfusards, they were in fact merely dangling on the strings of the Comintern. The terrifying phenomenon thrown up by Dreyfus's foes—the anti-democratic urban mob—still exists in many places. But where the mob has teeth, as for example in contemporary Nicaragua, it is organized by the party-state, and the Catholic Church is one of its main targets. The upheaval of political cartography makes it hard, today, to recognize the true heirs of the Dreyfusards.

Last year the French government commissioned a statue of Dreyfus. The French army managed to raise objections to the proposed site, the courtyard of the École Militaire where Dreyfus was stripped of his epaulets after sentencing. But the man who described himself as "only an artillery officer" will soon stand commemorated on the grounds of the Polytechnique, his alma mater. Dreyfus's Job-like faith in France and French justice makes him a striking figure in ways never quite imagined by the Dreyfusards. Bredin's book is a very fine rendering of his story.

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THE MORAL LIFE OF CHILDREN. By ROBERT COLES. *Atlantic Monthly Press. 302 pp. $19.95.*

THE POLITICAL LIFE OF CHILDREN. By ROBERT COLES. *Atlantic Monthly Press. 341 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by LARRY D. NACHMAN

"GOD, has he a bad case of the preaching bug." This comment, reported to us by the Harvard psychiatrist Robert Coles, comes from a fourteen-year-old boy who is speaking about a movie he has just seen. He might well have applied it to the earnest author of these two connected works, *The Moral Life of Children* and *The Political Life of Children.*

For two decades and more, Robert Coles has traveled throughout the United States and to other lands conducting in-depth interviews of children. Here we have the results of his research, presented (as in his earlier series, *Children of Crisis,* which is devoted to the inner lives of American children ex-

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clusively) in the form of long quotations taken from the transcripts of his interviews and directed at elucidating the themes under discussion. Unfortunately it must be stated at the outset that this approach creates problems for the reader. Frequently, Coles does not comment on what he relates, and we are left wondering what principle of selection led him to present one quotation rather than another. Or again, after giving us a long quotation, Coles will tell us that the statement has actually been culled from conversations which took place over several hours or days. Although one senses that Coles is an accurate reporter, one cannot help suspecting that the editing has significantly reshaped the character of what is being said.

But at least Coles does lend some organization and coherence to the ideas of the children he quotes; would that he had done the same for his own argument. One does not feel here the force of a progression of ideas. In both these books it is impossible to say why one chapter is placed before or after another, and even within chapters the movement of ideas seems to be governed by associations in the author's mind rather than by linked chains of thought. What binds the work together in each case is Coles's point of view, and even that is assumed rather than argued.

In *The Moral Life of Children* Coles sets out to examine the presence in children, and particularly children who are destitute, of that complex of qualities which is known familiarly as character. He is, he writes,

> trying to figure out how to account for some of those [moral] qualities, how they relate to the condition of people who are weak, who are defenseless, who are constantly in jeopardy.

He presents examples of such children and writes convincingly of the hardness of their lives and the decency of their characters. He tells us how much he admires them. But he hardly ventures the promised explanation for the existence of goodness in the midst of squalor. Even when the words of the children themselves suggest a possible explanation, Coles does not follow their lead. Again and again the children who are the moral heroes of Coles's book assert that in clinging to the good despite the deprivation of their lives they are following God's will. Yet *The Moral Life of Children* is not a study of the impact of religion on the moral sensibility of the children of the poor.

STILL, if Coles does not provide an explanation, he does leave an impression, and it is an old and familiar one. Goodness in his view can come only to those who have suffered material deprivation; the wealthy have been too corrupted by their riches to retain any concern for their fellow man. Coles, to be sure, does not speak so categorically—he is forever qualifying his statements and admonishing us never to generalize—but his overall message is that poverty is virtually a necessary condition of goodness. In so suggesting, Coles turns his back on an important element of liberal and socialist thinking, according to which poverty is an evil precisely because it *damages* the soul and denies people their moral status. Whether consciously or not, he seems to be reverting instead to what is in fact a major theme of Christian pietism.

One wonders whether similar influences may not account for Coles's tendency, in assessing individual goodness, to focus on motive and intention and to neglect the consequences of actions. In the 18th century Bernard de Mandeville formulated the paradox, "Private vices, public virtues"; there are, in other words, acts undertaken for selfish reasons which nevertheless redound to the benefit of society. (Adam Smith's theory of the "invisible hand" was part of an effort to systematize Mandeville's insight.) Relatively few people today accept the optimistic view of man and nature which lies behind this dictum, but the distinction it draws between motivation and consequence is an important one.

Coles, for instance, offers us the story of a Brazilian prostitute with a heart of gold who gives away much of what she earns to provide

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food for the desperately poor children of Rio. But she has, we learn incidentally, brothers and sisters of her own. Could not the money she so charitably gives away be better used to break the cycle of poverty in her own family? The issue of moral right and wrong here is certainly not clear-cut, but it deserves much more careful discussion than Coles gives to it. A soul-gazer to whom the question of results is irrelevant, he simply presents the young woman to us as a saint, pure and simple.

IN *The Political Life of Children*, Coles turns his attention to "the barriers separating this planet's human beings: nationality, race, class —the three most important." Of these, Coles places particular emphasis on the first: six of the nine chapters of *The Political Life of Children* have the word "nationalism" in the title.

Robert Coles is a universalist; like the late Erik Erikson, whom he greatly admires and about whom he has written an adulatory book, he regards all those things which differentiate one group of people from another—"the agitated jingoism, the hateful chauvinist invective, the arrogant nativism"—as distortions of human nature. They are, moreover, distortions that are acquired rather than real. The word "culture" hardly appears in this book, and neither does the whole complex of language, history, outlook, and behavior that it stands for. All these facts of human life are either passed over or, more characteristically, made to seem moral and intellectual flaws. Those who see differences between their own kind and others are judged to be simply prejudiced.

What is at issue here is suggested by some obviously deeply felt lines of Coles as he wonders how he can understand those who "differ from him substantially":

> Nor do I know whether it's possible now, after a decade of wandering across countries and continents, to do justice to this question—how the observer, or one observer at least, may overcome the most powerful social or political obstacles toward self-comprehension.

On the face of it, this passage makes no sense. Why should our differences from others cause us difficulty in understanding *ourselves*? What fills in the gap in the argument is the unstated idea, borrowed from Erik Erikson, of "pseudospeciation": insofar as we are differentiated into groups, and hence prevented from seeing our solidarity with the whole of mankind, we are remote from our true self, which is the nature we share with all human beings.

Early in *The Political Life of Children*, Coles tells of being challenged by one of his respondents. "Where," a boy asks him, "would *you* be if you weren't an American?" This is one occasion on which Coles does not find a gem in the mouth of a babe; the question goes unanswered. It is nevertheless a telling question. Whereas, to Coles, nationality is an idea, one that is learned and can therefore be unlearned, the boy's question points to a deeper underlying reality. As the question suggests, our entire way of organizing experience, our thoughts, perceptions, and even our emotional responses are what they are, at least in part, because we were born into one culture rather than another. To speak of a self which is independent of these cultural determinants is to speak abstractly. Frenchmen, Japanese, Americans exist; universal man does not exist.

Coles fears human plurality because he believes it engenders hatred and injustice. It is, however, hard to see what is accomplished by denying the reality which everyone observes in his daily life. Will people hate less and love more by being persuaded that the constellation of behavior and values that make up their lives is false or unimportant? Coles is disturbed and angered by the suffering in the world, which he sees as owing much to the distribution of material benefits according to accidents of birth and nationality. He is not the first to be so disturbed. That something so arbitrary can have such important consequences for our lives and our very identity has seemed to many both unfair and demeaning. Perhaps our lives *should* be shaped exclusively by the choices we make rather than by chance; for better or worse, they are not.

BOTH these volumes end with the nuclear threat. There is a logic at work here. So grave is the nuclear peril that all other issues may be expected to shrink before it. Facing the horrible prospect of the destruction of mankind, we should once and for all forget the concerns of our daily lives, concerns which bind us to some of our fellows as they separate us from others. By invoking the specter of nuclear war, Coles is urging us to put away our differences in order to ensure our survival—as if men have never known how to negotiate across those differences, or as if those differences have not also been the wellsprings of human activities that have graced the world with gifts beyond compare. Besides, after we have put away our differences, what, save our lives, will we have left?

Approaching the City

SETTING MUNICIPAL PRIORITIES 1986. Edited by CHARLES BRECHER and RAYMOND D. HORTON. *New York University Press. 476 pp. $30.00.*

POLITICAL CRISIS/FISCAL CRISIS. By MARTIN SHEFTER. *Basic Books. 270 pp. $21.95.*

BEYOND ENTITLEMENT. By LAWRENCE M. MEAD. *Free Press. 318 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by JULES COHN

Approaching a City, Edward Hopper's somber-hued painting of 1946, offers a blocked view of an urban landscape as seen by arriving railway passengers. A high stone wall bisects the canvas, obstructing the sight of a row of buildings. In the foreground are the iron rails, but our view of them is also limited, for they disappear into the dark entrance of a tunnel that looms ahead.

Approaching the city with an unfettered eye is a problem even for dogged professional observers,

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JULES COHN, *who writes on business, culture, and municipal affairs, is the author of* The Conscience of the Corporations.

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whose lines of inquiry into the "urban crisis," so glibly named more than two decades ago, tend to be as rigid as Hopper's rails, heading toward the darkness. Yet not so long ago it did seem possible that new ways of thinking about city life might emerge, and that was when the fiscal emergency of the mid-1970's in New York drew the boundary between good intentions and their costs. Those bleak days, which brought Mayor Edward I. Koch into office, also brought the opportunity for a fresh look at the responsibilities and proper scope of local government, and the obligations of citizenship.

This new crop of books devoted to the urban condition shows, however, that it is far more difficult to approach the city with a clear view than to identify, classify, or moralize about its problems. Each of the books acknowledges the economic difficulties of our cities, and each is concerned with the plight of the poor. The intriguing contrasts among them arise from the perspectives brought by their authors to these important issues. Where one is completely preoccupied with the need for "services," another sees New York's fiscal crisis as a bargaining weapon in the hands of the city's elites, while the third looks beyond both programs and interests to pose a moral theory of the polity.

THE approach taken in *Setting Municipal Priorities 1986* is that of "policy analysis." Practitioners of this art, who first came to national attention as "whiz kid" planners in the Defense Department of the early 1960's, specialize in identifying problems and proposing "costed-out" solutions from which decision-makers can make presumably enlightened choices. *SMP 1986* is a latter-day specimen of the type, replete with the necessary apparatus of tables, charts, and lists of quantitative data that lend the appearance of laboratory precision.

The seventh in an annual series on New York City, *SMP 1986* is divided into three parts, with contributions by specialists in public health, transportation, housing, education, management and human resources, child welfare, and

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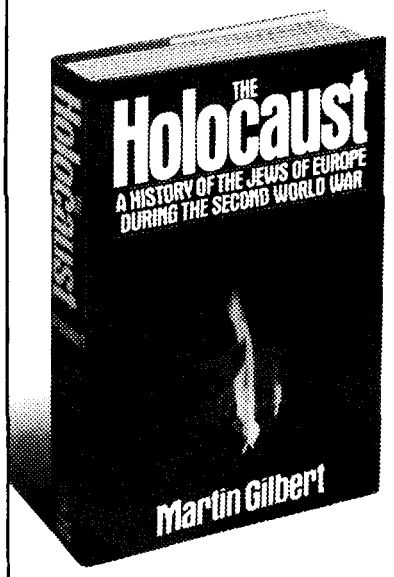

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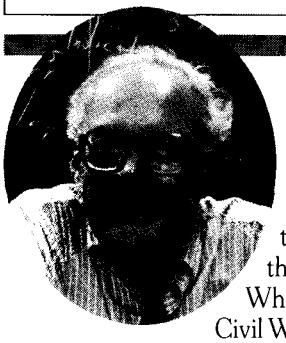

As a distinguished social critic and long-time reader of the Sage of Concord, Irving Howe here reassesses Emerson's influence on American culture. Starting in the 1850's, a host of former disciples arrayed themselves against Emerson's optimism. Howe explores their reaction in the literature of work (Melville and Mark Twain), the literature of Edenic fraternity (James Fenimore Cooper, Whitman, and Twain), and the literature of loss (all the post-Civil War writers).

The Emersonian spirit, Howe argues, pervaded their writings. It became a permanent part of the American psyche and is still a dominant spirit in the national experience.

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other social services. Following compilations of figures on the city's population (it has continued to decline since the early 1980's), median family income (it is less than 85 percent of the national average), and income distribution (64 percent of Hispanics and 54 percent of blacks are poor or near poor, by national standards), *SMP 1986* focuses on the matter of "service delivery." This phrase, indeed, probably best sums up the conception of government that informs the book. For to most of the contributors to *SMP 1986*, New York City *is* mainly a system of "inputs," "outputs," and "decision opportunities." The embattled plain of the nation's major metropolis is reduced here to a finite list of problems, and the complex and subtle forces at work in New York today are packed into simple formats, often with specific program solutions or "policy options" attached. Not surprisingly, in keeping with this clerical approach, New York's colorful mayor is referred to by name only a few times in these pages.

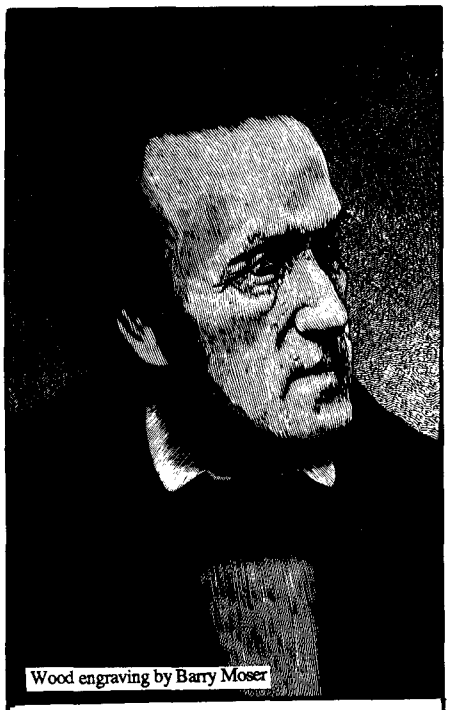
To be sure, from the vantage point of the classroom or the planning table, policy analysis of the kind practiced here has its attractions, for it promises order in a world in flux. But the order is a mirage. (It might be added here that the facts and figures on which the analysis is based are themselves not beyond dispute; they are, at any rate, regularly challenged by the city's budget director and other local officials.) One chilling example is provided by *SMP*'s approach to the phenomenon nowadays signified by the phrase, "child abuse." *SMP* offers a woefully mechanistic definition of the problem, concluding (of course) that poverty is its main cause and settling on routine solutions: "intensive services," "early warning mechanisms," and "crisis intervention." Thus, in only a few pages of plodding text, it disposes of an age-old, heartbreaking, and very complicated emotional issue between adults and children of all social classes. Only in the section on housing, written by George Sternlieb and David Listokin, is there an acknowledgment of the profundity of at least one of New York's problems and the political difficulty involved in arriving at even a partial remedy.

SMP 1986, then, is for the most part a compartmentalized manual for the well-intentioned technocrat, an almanac of the "service delivery" clichés of our time, laced with the cant of the helping professions and, despite all its charts and tables, and the quotient of useful information to be found in it, narrower in its view of the cityscape than the work of those amateur policy analysts of long ago, Jacob Riis and Charles Dickens.

Approaching the city from another direction is Martin Shefter, who teaches political science at Cornell. In *Political Crisis/Fiscal Crisis* Shefter does raise and discuss some searching issues, though his argument too is shaped by a wide-eyed faith in services and, as well, a misplaced reliance on categorical explanations.

Shefter recognizes that New York's fiscal crisis was a political, not merely a bookkeeping, event, and he places it in useful historical perspective. Indeed, his may be the only treatment of the subject so far to suggest that revenue and credit emergencies, rather than being aberrations or exceptions, have played a regular part in the politics not only of New York but of other large American cities as well. As Shefter points out, the events of the 1970's were only the most recent in a long series of periodic fiscal crises that have occurred for well over a century in New York. Each time, the city, unable to sell its bonds on the open market, and almost unable to pay its employees and creditors, has had a "brush with bankruptcy."

Shefter's valiant effort to analyze the pattern he has uncovered hinges on the notion of an ongoing struggle between the advocates of spending, whose beneficiaries (at least sometimes) are the poor, and their more powerful adversaries who are concerned with balancing the budget and restoring the city's credit. Throughout New York's history, he argues, even liberal mayors, sympathetic to "expenditure-demanding" interests, have eventually had to cave in, and accept the "fiscal discipline" imposed either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The Darker Side of Genius
Richard Wagner's Anti-Semitism
JACOB KATZ

A scholar of international repute considers Wagner's anti-Semitism in the context of his time, place, and aspirations, rather than in relation to his later appropriation by the Nazis. Katz argues that there is, in fact, very little in Wagner's art that, without forced speculation, can be related to his racist views. *A book from the Tauber Institute for the Study of European Jewry at Brandeis University. Selected by the Jewish Book Club.* $14.95

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by capital markets or by local businessmen, or both.

Shefter's thesis draws in part on the important work of Harvard's Edward C. Banfield and James Q. Wilson on the "incentives" that drive local politicians and the "imperatives" and "cleavages" that prevail in city politics. But Shefter also introduces a deterministic approach eschewed by his Harvard models when he claims, as he does in the early part of his book, that Tammany Hall, displacing an earlier "regime" based on an alliance between mercantile and artisan "elites," went on to establish its own "hegemony" at the expense of more "radical contenders" for leadership of the poorer classes. It is this approach, and an attendant bias in favor of social action, particularly when undertaken by self-styled advocates of the poor, that shapes and ultimately tilts Shefter's portrait of the city.

Shefter's one-track view of John V. Lindsay's mayoral career is a case in point. As he tells the story, in his first term Lindsay, a fusion mayor, "sought to promote justice and social harmony" by implementing his "vision of how the good of the city as a whole could be advanced." Yet these were the years, it will be remembered, which saw rioting in Bedford-Stuyvesant, bitter group conflict in Forest Hills and Ocean Hill-Brownsville, and million-dollar consultant scandals in City Hall. In this same period, moreover, Lindsay vastly increased new program expenditures, including subsidies for "participatory community institutions" that spent their time attacking schools and other bureaucracies in his own administration, and regrouped existing departments into top-heavy superagencies, also at enormous cost. Shefter does comment incisively on the enormous "floating deficit" accumulated by the former mayor, but his own biases elude him when he concludes that in Lindsay's second term it was the need to accommodate "conservative" interests that led to the curtain's coming down on his glorious "reformist thrust."

Two sections of *Political Crisis/Fiscal Crisis* stand out as indicative

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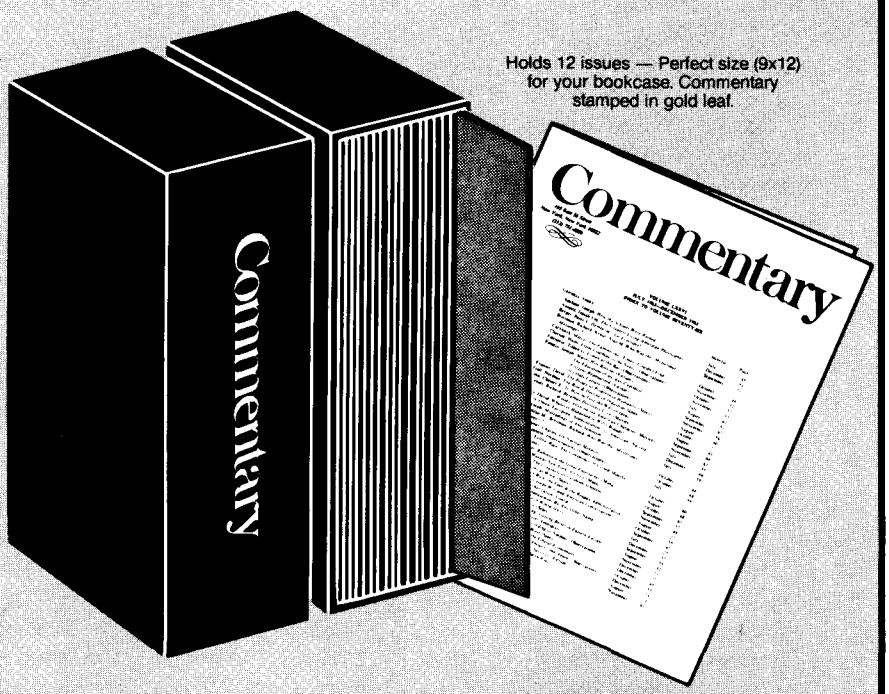

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of Shefter's ideological stance. Under the heading, "The Vanguards of Reform," he uncritically hails the activities of "the policy-oriented research community in New York," who turn out to be none other than the analysts of *Setting Municipal Priorities*, and looks forward to the day when their "conferences and volumes" might constitute the "intellectual leadership" for a "neoreformist" political coalition in the city. Similarly taken at face value are the "advocacy professionals" who ran the publicly funded Mobilization for Youth and other "demonstration projects" of the early 1960's. Shefter paints a portrait of these middle-class tribunes of the poor as "Young Turks" who were "willing to fight" for their ideals in order to root out the "morally indefensible" compromises at the heart of city government. A more realistic assessment would take into account the permanent damage wreaked by these strategists of change on established neighborhood and municipal institutions.

Edward Koch also comes to judgment in *Political Crisis/Fiscal Crisis*, and to the sound of a drumbeat rather than trumpets. In a lengthy effort to describe his style of leadership, Shefter grants that the mayor who "travels on his tongue" has invigorated the office, lowered the city's political temperature, and played a major part in restoring financial stability. Nevertheless, Koch's mayoralty represents for Shefter the unhappy triumph of business imperatives; the mayor is "the public official through whom the proponents of fiscal discipline" find representation, and thus his term spells trouble for the champions of "reform."

If *Political Crisis/Fiscal Crisis* is thus in some sense a political melodrama, with the "fiscal imperative" playing the part of the villain, Lawrence M. Mead in *Beyond Entitlement* presents a study of federal programs for the disadvantaged and unemployed since 1960 in which there are no heroes and no villains—and no file-folder solutions. Rather than approach New York City exclusively, Mead takes a ruminative look at the nature of community, and his inquiry thus implicitly challenges notions about the role of government, the obligations of citizens, and the overall meaning of social life that are taken for granted or ignored by the other authors.

Like Shefter, Mead is a political scientist trained at Harvard, but his portrait of the city of our time is philosophical rather than ideological. To Mead, the "fiscal imperative" and the hard evidence of declining social trends (measured by such criteria as crime, unemployment, public assistance, and SAT scores), while indeed casting a shadow over the urban scene, also provide an opportunity for a reconsideration of our social aims. His book is studded with literary language and ecclesiastical allusions: he speaks of the "tragedy" of government authority ill-used, the "mystery" of the "primal struggle" over the proper organization of society, and the importance of a world in which "others are bound as I am bound." Distinguishing himself both from the social mechanics of *SMP* and from Shefter's rebellious "advocacy professionals," Mead argues for a "civic stance" in our relation to government and constructs a model of authority as a tool rather than a target of social thinking.

Liberals, writes Mead, with their "government-blaming reflexes," attribute the problems of the poor mainly to hostile social conditions, and in response call for more government programs—but without government authority. Laissez-faire conservatives, for their part, would counter the growing problem of welfare dependency by simply cutting back on government. "The thread that connects" the two, according to Mead, "is trust in the individual at the expense of authority." Hence our current predicament. "Welfare is unpopular because it satisfies only half the public mind. To eliminate welfare would satisfy only the other half. The public will remain uncomfortable until a civic version of welfare is realized."

The theme of this book, then, is the importance of common obligations in upholding "the civilities that undergird everyday society." Unlike the policy analysts extolled by Shefter and typified by the authors of *SMP*, Mead argues for a reciprocal relationship between citizens and government. In fact, some of our illusions about the power of programs to alleviate social ills seem to him traceable to the "vogue of policy analysis." "Agnostic" analysts, he observes, with all their techniques, mainly "staff out" ways for privileged elites to fulfill their responsibilities to the poor through an ever-expansive government. They lack a view of a functioning citizenry; they lack a sense of "administrative statecraft."

Alongside statements like these, the views of the authors of *SMP* and *Political Crisis/Fiscal Crisis* seem altogether limited. For it is Mead, a confessed civic conservative, who would use not simply the distributive capacities of bureaucracy but also the governing capacities of politics to achieve a society in which all Americans participate. Appropriately enough, it is Mead, too, who bases his vision of political possibility not on some utopian idea of what urban life should be but on a Hopper-like appreciation of the darkness and ambiguity that must necessarily attend our view of the city and its problems.

A Pitiless Tableau

THE HOLOCAUST: A HISTORY OF THE JEWS OF EUROPE DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR. By MARTIN GILBERT. *Holt, Rinehart and Winston. 959 pp. $24.95.*

Reviewed by
THEODORE S. HAMEROW

How is it that the scholarly literature on the Holocaust, which began some forty years ago as a narrow trickle of articles and monographs almost unnoticed amid all the massive treatises on the military, diplomatic, and political history of World War II, has now turned into a deluge of books attracting more popular attention than any other aspect of that terrible conflict? It is almost as if the

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extermination of European Jewry had been too awful to contemplate as long as it was still a living reality, an immediate experience. Only after it ceased to be a contemporary event and became a historical memory could it be confronted in all its horrifying detail. Those who had lived through it as victims, perpetrators, or even onlookers seemed at first to suppress recollection, a psychological burden they found too heavy to bear. Not until the passage of time began to widen the distance between them and what they had experienced were they able to remember and recount the unendurable past. The flood of memories suddenly broke through the wall of deliberate repression which had contained it for almost a generation. We can now at last look at the Holocaust in all its cruelty and heartbreak.

But it is not only the volume of the scholarship on the destruction of European Jewry which has changed. Its focus has shifted as well. The first works dealing with the Holocaust relied primarily on the evidence contained in captured German documents, and they accordingly emphasized the bureaucratic and structural aspects of the war against the Jews. When did the Third Reich decide on the policy of extermination? Who was entrusted with the barbarous task? What methods were employed? And what were the losses suffered by the Jewish population in the various countries of Europe? The individual tragedy, the private agony of the Holocaust, was obscured or diluted by organizational detail and statistical precision. That was essentially the approach of Gerald Reitlinger's *The Final Solution*, published in 1953, and even of Raul Hilberg's *The Destruction of the European Jews*, which appeared in 1961 (a revised and much enlarged edition was published by Holmes & Meier last year). Such books did not overlook the suffering inflicted by the Holocaust on millions of ordinary men and women who had become its victims. But their emphasis was on the big picture, on the broad effect.

The important contribution of Lucy S. Dawidowicz's *The War Against the Jews*, published in 1975 (and now reissued by Bantam in a tenth-anniversary edition with a new introduction), was that it reflected extensively for the first time the everyday experience of those who lived and died during the Holocaust, who hoped, struggled, resisted, succumbed, or survived. The emphasis of scholarly studies had shifted finally from grand design to specific incident, from general description to particular event. The world could now face the extermination of European Jewry in its every cruelty and horror.

The new book on the Holocaust by Martin Gilbert, the official biographer of Winston Churchill and the author of a number of books on Jewish history, represents the final confrontation of historical scholarship with the personal agony of the war against the Jews. Relying on what is by now a substantial body of firsthand accounts by witnesses to the extermination—dia-

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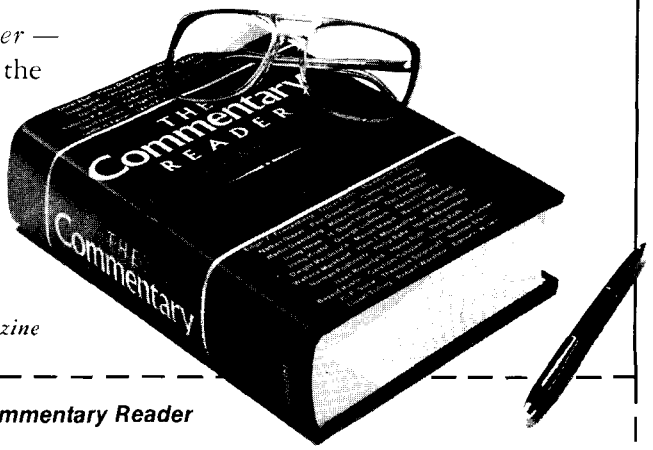

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ries, letters, memoirs, and interviews—he portrays the experiences of countless small people trapped by a terrifying fate, experiences which had been largely ignored for almost a generation because they were too appalling. Without intruding into the narrative, without preaching or sermonizing, he draws, stroke by stroke, a picture of the Holocaust devastating in its effect. The relentless accumulation of detail, much of it described in the words of the participants, mounts to a climax which is almost unbearable. Small bits of evidence, broken fragments of information, hints of catastrophe, glimpses of horror, all build up to form a vast tableau of human suffering pitiless in its pitiability. It is not literary skill or stylistic polish which gives the work its emotional impact. The crude, unadorned subject matter simply seizes the reader in an iron grip.

THIS does not mean that at last we have the definitive account of the Holocaust. Not at all. The subtitle of this work, "A History of the Jews of Europe During the Second World War," is in fact misleading. Gilbert concentrates almost entirely on the Jewish communities of Eastern Europe: Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, White Russia, and the Ukraine. There are occasional brief references to what was happening to the Jews of France or Italy, of Belgium or the Netherlands. But the emphasis is largely, indeed almost exclusively, on Eastern Jewry.

Secondly, the book hardly deals with the background, planning, and execution of the "Final Solution." The men and organizations responsible for the war against the Jews, their ideas and motives, attitudes and beliefs, goals and aspirations—subjects prominent in Reitlinger's and in Hilberg's works—are largely missing in this one. Nor does Gilbert consider some of the important questions which have recently been raised concerning the general policy of genocide. Did Hitler contemplate the Holocaust as early as his accession to power in 1933, or did he decide on it following the military and diplomatic successes which placed the continent under his control after 1939? Were those who participated in the extermination of the Jews psychopathic killers or ordinary, faceless men corrupted by an ideology which glorified mass murder as a patriotic duty? And what about the Germans in general? How could a nation which had long been a standard-bearer of European culture accept with enthusiasm one of the most brutal tyrannies of modern times? The emphasis of this book on the shattering experiences of those who became victims of the Holocaust precludes serious consideration of its ideological and political roots.

Even on issues pertaining directly to the destruction of East European Jewry, Gilbert is occasionally ambiguous or inconclusive. For example, he gives instances of Christians who risked and sometimes sacrificed their lives to help their Jewish neighbors. But there are also accounts of Poles, Lithuanians, Ukrainians, and Slovaks who participated in the hunt for Jews, not under duress or even for a reward, but out of sheer anti-Semitic hatred. Are no generalizations possible then about the prevailing attitude and behavior of non-Germans in the East during the Holocaust?

And what about the response of the Jews themselves to the terrible fate which had overtaken them? Like most recent writers, Gilbert dwells at length on the Jewish resistance movement, which, though facing hopeless odds, opposed the murderous policies of the Third Reich. But how large was this movement? In what operations did it engage? What losses did it inflict on the enemy? What casualties did it suffer? Was it inspired simply by a devotion to the Jewish community, or by religious faith, or by some secular ideology like Zionism, socialism, or Communism? And how did it compare in numbers with those who went to their death meekly, or those who faced the end panic-stricken and hysterical, or those who collaborated with the Germans in the hope of saving their own lives? These are questions which remain unanswered.

Indeed, the organizational structural of Gilbert's work makes it difficult for him to reach any broad conclusions regarding attitude or conduct. Lucy Dawidowicz, relying on similar historical data, built her account around a series of central issues; the role of the *kehilla* and of the *Judenrat*; the activities in the ghetto of the official administration, of the unofficial community, and of the political underground; the way of life and the way of death under the German occupation; and the behavior of Jews in crisis and catastrophe. But Gilbert simply follows the chronological sequence of events, beginning with 1933 and ending in 1945, so that his narrative becomes one long cry of pain in the face of an unspeakable tragedy. The sufferings of the German Jews in 1933, when almost 50 of them were killed by the Nazis, sound almost as cruel as those of the Polish Jews between 1939 and 1941, when 30,000 perished, and they in turn seem almost as unbearable as those of the nearly six million European Jews who were murdered between 1941 and 1945. The difficulty in dealing with the Holocaust as a vast collection of shattering personal catastrophes is that all perception of scale vanishes, all sense of proportion becomes numb. Each sorrow is as overwhelming as any other; each loss is equally heartrending.

YET all objections and reservations pale before the sheer burning intensity of this book. In the contemplation of this stark, towering monument to a vanished people and its culture, dispute begins to seem mean-spirited, perhaps even disrespectful or irreverent. The tragic sweep of the narrative overwhelms the critical faculty. This may not be the most comprehensive or the most analytical or the most perceptive account of the destruction of European Jewry, but it is the most moving, the most devastating. For those who seek to capture the feel of what it must have been like to live and die in the most terrible historical tragedy of our time, nothing can surpass Martin Gilbert's *Holocaust*.

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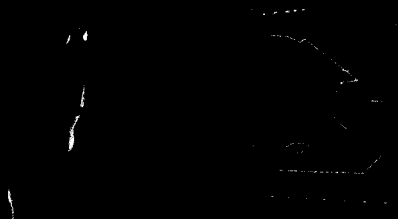

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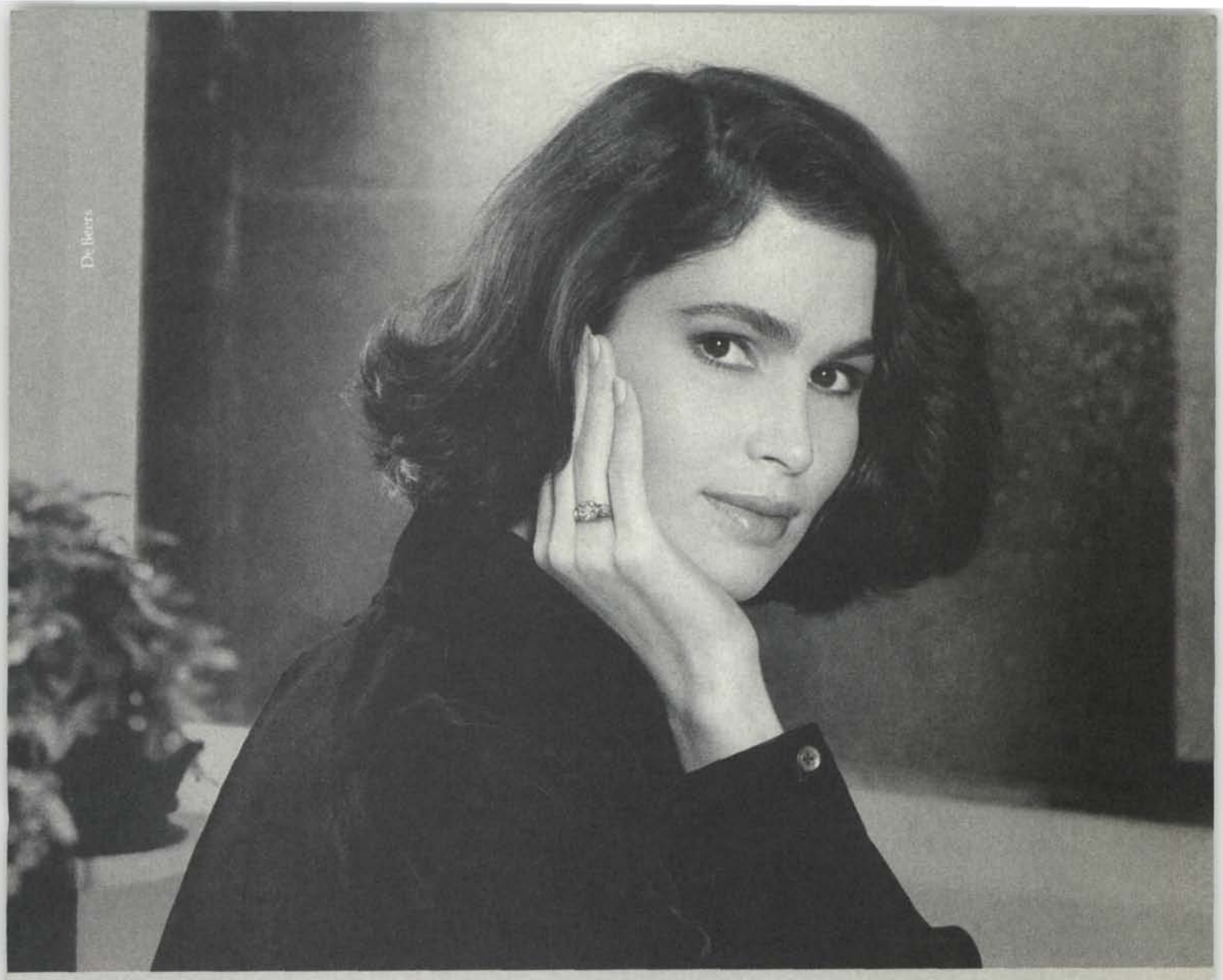

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